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NEW STATESMAN

The story of Stella Burnett – careless doctors, meagre justice

by Bruce Page

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Propping up the Bar

The story of Mrs Stella Burnett, described in these pages, provides another horrific example of the arbitrary nature of legal services provided in Britain. Not only was it against all odds that Mrs Burnett's life was saved; it was also entirely a matter of good fortune that she eventually received adequate compensation for the disaster that befell her in hospital.

The British legal system has been lavishly admired, especially by British lawyers. It is certainly a thriving industry. But it is a protected and monopolistic one, and it does not do what the public expects of it above all: to provide competent advice and representation at accessible cost to all who need it.

The Royal Commission on Legal Services, which is expected to report early next year, has already heard evidence on all the shabby restrictive practices by which the two branches of the legal profession protect their monopoly profits. The Bar will no doubt defend the tradition by which it restricts and controls its own recruits, thereby guaranteeing princely incomes to a few and almost certain elevation to the judiciary for all who want it. It will defend barristers' own immunity from legal responsibility for their advice. The Law Society will defend solicitors' monopoly of conveyancing, and of contact with the client. Both will defend the enforced separation between the two branches of the profession.

The fact that two lawyers are obliged to do work which could be done by one causes unnecessary cost and so helps put legal service out of reach of all but a few. In minor cases, particularly, solicitors waste a great deal of their expensive time writing out details of evidence for barristers who then perform a function in court which the solicitors could do just as well, if not better, themselves.

Barristers operate in a remote and rarified climate which does not encourage them to keep in touch with the realities of life as experienced by the majority of their clients. Their enforced segregation leads to the lofty, unrealistic posturing, and the evasion of moral responsibility, which are two of the less attractive characteristics of the English Bar. It actually lowers the standard of justice by perpetuating the shambolic business of late returned briefs, which often means barristers have only a few minutes to prepare a case before pleading it in court. Clients, meanwhile, have no real choice as to who should represent them.

Fusion of the two professions would make skilled advocacy more readily available. At present, few solicitors, especially outside London, are in a position to instruct highly specialised counsel. Fusion would permit the development of law firms offering a variety of specialisation. It might also help to break down the exclusive and élitist character of the judiciary – by including solicitors among those eligible for the Bench.

It will be something of a miracle if the Royal Commission recommends any move to close the gap between the two professions. And miracles are definitely not expected by those who know the Commission. Yet the case for reform is irrefutable. There is no need for an abrupt edict forbidding barristers and solicitors to operate in the traditional relationship. If some barristers prefer to act only on instructions from solicitors there may be good arguments for allowing them to do so. But there are no respectable arguments for forbidding them to act directly for clients, or for depriving solicitors of the right of audience in higher courts. The least that is needed is an end to these absurd embargoes so that lawyers can carry out their work in which ever way suits their own abilities and their clients' interests. Some will presumably specialise in advocacy, others in legal advice. If the present arrangements really are so much in the clients' interest, as the professional advocates insist, then consumer demand for the best available service will soon prove them right.

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Notes on Politics and Power

A memo on Thorpe

Patrick Wintour: One interesting precursor to the decision of Tony Hetherington, the DPP, to bring charges of conspiracy to murder against Jeremy Thorpe and three others last week was a private memo written by Peter Hain on 4 July to a number of his political colleagues including Tony Benn, Neil Kinnock, Hugh Jenkins, Tom Jackson and Dick Clements. In the memo Hain explained that he had been assured – and convinced – that the police felt they had enough evidence to bring conspiracy charges and that Thorpe would be included in the police net. Hain urged that the DPP should not obstruct any charges being brought and that the Labour Party should prepare itself for the political implications. He also argued that no cover-up should be tolerated, instigated or continued by the Labour Party and that it would be disastrous for the Party to be seen to be stopping the charges being brought as some unwritten part of the Lib-Lab pact. For one thing he feared the Tory Party might try to make some political capital out of any delay. (Questions had already been asked in the House by Tories about the disappearance of some of Norman Scott's social security papers.)

The Prime Minister received Hain's memo via Hugh Jenkins. It appears that at this relatively late stage in the Thorpe case Callaghan did not know of the determination of the police to prosecute Thorpe. The content of the memo was a surprise to him and he used it as the basis of a discussion with David Steel at a private meeting on 19 July. Steel was not allowed to read or copy the memo. It went on, however, to say that *The Pencourt File* had been misrepresented in the press at the time of publication and that its contents should be read with care, particularly its references to the right-wing faction inside MI5.

The Scottish strap in court

Ron McKay writes: To any adult educated in Scotland the town of Lochgelly is seared on the memory, not for its historical or geographical importance, but because the otherwise anonymous Fife town has given its name to the thick and weighty leather strap with which school teachers inflict punishment on pupils. The corporal punishment of adults has been proscribed in Britain since the European Court of Human Rights judged the practice – peculiar to the Isle of Man – 'inhuman and degrading'. Indeed, the British government has now asked the Manx Parliament to repeal its birching law. But the caning or strapping of children continues in classrooms throughout the country and for generations of Scottish children the Lochgelly belt (a factory in the town has a monopoly supply) has been painfully linked with education.

However, the right of a teacher to physically punish a child is now the subject of a test case which the European Commission of Human Rights will discuss in Strasbourg on 11 October. A Glasgow parent, Mrs Grace Campbell, has brought a complaint under the Convention of Human Rights that belting is 'inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'. Mrs Campbell's case is the first in a series of similar actions from parents in Scotland and England who seek to have corporal punishment banned from classrooms. The case has been four years in preparation, since Mrs Campbell failed to get an assurance from her local education authority that her son, now nine, would not be belted by his teachers. When the Commission meet to hear the complaint they will have before them lengthy submissions from both the United Kingdom government and Mrs Campbell's legal adviser, Norman MacEwan, chairman of the Scottish Council for Civil Liberties. They also have samples of 'the Lochgelly'. 'We sent some belts over' Mr MacEwan said 'and I think the Commission were so surprised that they wrote back for an assurance that they were actually used in schools'.

Since 1968 in Scotland there has been a code of practice, drawn up by the teaching unions and the Scottish Education Department, governing corporal punishment. The code was intended to lead to the eventual end of the belt. According to the SCCL, however, the code is regularly breached and elimination is no nearer. Two years ago SCCL revealed that even handicapped children were being strapped.

Liverpool's prodigal Liberals

Steve Kelly writes: Eighteen months after deciding to sell council houses to sitting tenants, Liverpool's Liberal council moved a step further this week towards selling Liverpool's entire housing stock when a council sub-committee agreed to sell vacant houses and flats on the open market. The move has outraged Labour councillors in the city who have continually warned that the day will soon dawn when anyone at all can buy any council house in Liverpool.

With one of the most appalling housing records in the country, Liverpool is a collection of derelict, vandalised, run-down housing estates. More than 15,000 people are on a waiting list which grows each year and will rise more sharply still if Liberal plans are fulfilled. Liberal spokesmen argue that the cost of repairing the homes and maintaining them is far beyond an economic cost while the cost of demolition is similarly expensive. The only feasible alternative, they say, is to sell the homes to anyone willing to buy them no matter what the offer. Last month, three 15 storey tower blocks, known locally as the 'piggeries' went up for auction for the ridiculous price of £1.00. But even at £1.00 nobody was in sight to snap up the offer. The only cheap purchase so far appears to be the sale of one council house in Everton for £400 which has led many to suspect that the Liberal plan is just another public relations stunt.

Indeed since 1976 when the Liberals introduced their sales plan only 200 council houses have been sold although the sale of a further 1,000 is now in the pipeline. Although the sale of houses and flats at low prices might initially sound attractive, a number of qualifications need to be noted, argue Labour councillors. For a start, the council does not intend to carry out repairs before selling the homes but is prepared to give improvement grants which will come from the ratepayer's pocket. Mortgages also will come from the council and if interest rates are pegged while inflation rises, the brunt of the cost again will be borne by the ratepayer. Labour critics also point out that in 1976 the Liberals voted against a Labour proposal to increase the maintenance budget by £790,000 and have brought the present difficulty on themselves.

Exactly how many vacant flats and houses will now come on to the open market is debatable. Some calculate the total figure as high as 80,000 although the council stresses that there are only 2,000 vacant flats in the city at the moment and that the only vacant properties for sale will be where they have been refused three times by anyone on the waiting list. Trevor Jones, leader of Liverpool's Liberal council, cynically argues that most people on the waiting list are only interested in three-bedroomed detached houses and comments that in some cases as many as 100 refusals have been made for a particular property. But given some of Liverpool's council homes, that is hardly surprising.

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How not to create jobs

Patrick Wintour writes: At the western edge of the well-kept and expensive housing of London's Holland Park area live 2,500 people in three tower blocks. On the border between Hammersmith and Kensington councils, the area has first declined due to lack of jobs, then been ruined by the M 41 and finally neglected by both councils; unemployment is unusually high; the estate has more single parent families and pensioners than the average; it also has no community centre. In 1976 a tenants' association was formed and their elected representatives tried to bully the council into rectifying the lack of community facilities. Hammersmith provided £140,000 from its Home Office Urban Aid grant for capital and professional fees

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(Urban Aid stresses capital projects). Encouraged by the Notting Dale Urban Studies Centre, the tenants sought finance for the labour costs of the centre from a different bureaucracy, the labour orientated Manpower Services Commission. All the criteria laid down under the MSC's Job Creation Scheme seemed horribly satisfied by the deprivation of the area. Building the centre would be educational for the unskilled and mainly black youngsters who would be employed to work next to the necessary skilled professionals. The project, moreover, was not an attenuated purposeless piece of work like many of the new concoctions of MSC, who wrote a letter granting £95,000. Their generosity, however, knew a lot of bounds. The kid's salaries had to be fixed without discretion at £48.00 a week per head, the minimum rate of the Construction union UCATT. About twenty youngsters worked there at a time, doing the initial work of putting in the foundations and the frame. However 400 weeks of skilled labour were still needed. The price of this labour is fixed by the MSC's funding at £54.80 gross per week, a differential of only £6.80. According to the vacancies supervisor of West London Exchanges the minimum wages for a bricklayer, carpenter and plasterer are at the least £80.00 per week. The Project had no money to top up the wages themselves. Not surprisingly, no skilled labour has come forth at £54.80. The work at the community centre has consequently ground to a halt and all the promises to the kids that they would work alongside skilled labour remain unkept. The Director of Notting Dale Urban Studies Centre Chris Webb, bewildered by the MSC's ill-thought out policy, has written and spoken to the MSC about the need for intelligent flexibility so that 3·4 per cent of the total project costs, needed to boost craft wages, can be found. MSC will give no more. For the lack of £8,000, £60,000 of public money will sit redundant in the ground. Perhaps more important the 'work experience' of the increasingly morose black youngsters and of the working class tenants' association is losing out to the stubbornness of government.

The price of justice

Christopher Price writes: The final chapter has just been written in the Confait case – in which three London boys were found guilty of murder and arson in 1972, found innocent on appeal in 1975 after a campaign and pronounced guilty – 'on balance of probabilities' – in 1977 after an inquiry under Sir Henry Fisher – an ex-judge turned merchant banker and Oxford don. The final accounts are now available.

The three boys received £1,000 each *interim* compensation in 1976 because it was taking so long to set up the inquiry – but had to waive all claims at law to do so. They have now been told by the Home Office that their interim compensation is final. An adjudicator, one Sir Walker Carter, has said they might have been sent to prison for a similar period for a lesser act of arson to which they had pleaded guilty, and so they do not deserve any more money. (At the time of the offence, one was 14, one 16 and one 18 with a mental age of eight; I have yet to find a barrister who takes the arbitrator's statement seriously.) The boys are unsurprised, though others in the past have picked up anything between £7,000 and £15,000 for the sort of treatment they received; they never reckoned much to British justice and are now living their lives and raising families.

So are the lawyers, though in rather more affluent style; between them they probably picked up well over £100,000 of public money in the three trials which led up to the Fisher Inquiry. The Inquiry, we are now told, cost the taxpayer £205,250 plus an unspecified amount – about £25,000 – for police lawyers. It lasted just 46 days in all, and the itemised bill makes fascinating reading:

Fees and expenses to Chairman and counsel to the Inquiry	£41,000
Treasury solicitors Department	£25,000
Legal representation for the boys	£20,405
Legal representation for the DPP	£20,875

Two morals of the episode are clear: ambitious parents should continue to send their children to the Bar; and campaigners against miscarriages of justice should put greater faith in the courts, than in *ad hoc* inquiries: they seldom let the Establishment down.

Christopher Hitchens: The Pope, the Flesh and the Devil

To judge by the tide of uncritical sentimentality which swept over the British press at the death of Pope Paul, and the way in which the Palace announced that flags on public buildings would be flown at half mast, you might have thought that the Reformation had never taken place. *De mortuis* . . . may be a good enough motto, but surely our journals of record can rise above the level of Lisbon or Limerick. After all, it is only a few weeks since they bemoaned his uncharitable veto on a Catholic marriage for Prince Michael of Kent.

Pope Paul's incumbency, so far from being a continuum with that of John, or a period of innovation and statesmanship (*vide* anybody this week from Rees-Mogg's *Times* to Paul Johnson in the *Daily Mail*) was a period in which ancient and threatened superstitions were actually entrenched and re-affirmed. It was only in Lent last year that the Pope insisted, in case of doubt among the flock, that the devil was an actual being, who dominated the temporal creation of God. During the same period of fasting he told the faithful that 'you have heard a great deal about laicism, secularism, anticlericalism and atheism. *This is the world of Satan*' (italics mine). Christian Democrats rejoiced.

The threat of the Evil One was a favourite of the obscurantist Paul. In 1973, admonishing the dissident cardinals who challenged his inflexibility, he solemnly intoned that 'the smoke of Satan has entered the temple of God'. This was all of a piece with his controversial visit to Fatima, a Portuguese shrine which is looked on even by the most devout believers as a trifle doubtful and meretricious. His claim that he made the pilgrimage at the direct request of the Virgin only reminded some believers of the gap which Pope John had left.

Even the most sycophantic obituarists were in some difficulty with Pope Paul's stated and adamantine views on the use of contraception and the need for priests to be celibate. Here he was deaf to argument (and so many would-be critics preferred to hurry on and recall his absurd dispute with Archbishop Lefebvre).

Less often recalled (and in the case of *The Times* recalled not at all) was the notorious *Declaration on Certain Questions concerning Sexual Ethics*, published by his order in January 1976. This astonishing document outlawed pre-or extra-marital sex, condemned homosexuality and categorically forebad masturbation (charmingly known in Vatican circles as *solitaria voluptas*). 'Every genital act' said the statement 'must be within the framework of marriage'. As for homosexuals, 'in sacred scripture they are condemned as a serious depravity and even presented as the sad consequence of rejecting God'. Those given to *solitaria voluptas* were reminded that 'the deliberate use of the sexual faculty outside normal conjugal relations essentially contradicts the finality of the faculty'.

One wonders how he knew enough to draft such gibberish. It is, of course, untrue to say, as so many papers did, that his tenure was totally untroubled by scandal. Shortly after that deathly 1976 edict received the *imprimatur*, Roger Peyrefitte published a detailed allegation of a relationship between Paul and a well-known actor during Paul's earlier sojourn as Archbishop of Milan. The Pope went so far as to deny the rumour in St Peter's Square ('our humble person has been made the object of derision and calumny . . . '). But let it pass.

In terms of internal and external Roman Catholic politics, Paul was dismally reactionary. He several times reaffirmed the doctrine of his own infallibility (a strictly mundane and temporal concept), especially when he ran out of arguments in rebuking dissenters. And in 1969, discussing the reunification of the Christian Church, he made a deliberate point of emphasising the doctrine of papal primacy, hardly an ecumenical or tolerant idea. On infallibility he was especially lyrical, describing it as 'a beneficent lighthouse which guides the Church to its unrenounceable conquest: the truth of salvation'. Hard, in that case, to imagine how for so many centuries the Church got along without it. After this, his refusal to allow the synod of bishops a more democratic role was altogether unsurprising.

Obviously, he was a natural and instinctive conservative in secular terms as well. His period as Archbishop of Milan in the fifties is still remembered for its virulent crusade against the Communist Party and the unions. It is no accident that his announced 'favourite' for the succession is the ultra-rightist Cardinal Benelli, who was seen this year with Franz-Joseph Strauss at a gathering of Euro-conservatives. The Catholic Church is a conservative institution, but seldom has its symbolic figure put such little distance between himself and the claims of medieval guilt and Italian expediency.

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Onslaught on Prison Secrecy

LAURIE TAYLOR reports on a battery of legal cases which challenge the prison system and on the Home Office's defence by subterfuge and circumlocution.

My complimentary copy of *Prisons: Past and Future* arrived from Heinemann last week; a collection of papers from a rather self-congratulatory conference arranged last year by the Howard League to mark the bicentenary of John Howard's book, *The State of the Prisons*. Alongside the critical papers on present prison conditions the League also managed to provide a 'banquet', a choir harmonising Negro spirituals, a loyal toast, and a nasty moment when one of the organisers was seen forcibly expelling a lady from PROP (the prisoners' union) who had arrived to distribute some leaflets on the Hull riot. ('Of course you can't put them round the tables', he was indignantly explaining, 'We're having a banquet'.)

It's unreasonable, of course, to expect even conferences with radical credentials to culminate in the delegates forming into demolition squads and setting off purposefully up the Pentonville Road. But there was something rather dispiriting about the sight of rows of Howard League supporters listening in silence to Merlyn Rees' bland opening words 'It is with particular pleasure that I accept the invitation of the Howard League' – especially as they were spoken not by Rees himself but by a last minute substitute. Why on earth was the Home Office ever given pride of place at such an event? After all, as Sir Leon Radzinowicz reminds us in his contribution to the volume, one of the more surprising features of John Howard's investigations into prison conditions was the fact that he was allowed to conduct them without interference. Nowadays the Home Office would have prevented him getting anywhere near such abuses, just as it has excluded independent psychiatrists, lawyers, and researchers, stifled parliamentary debate on prison policy, and muted prisoners' complaints. When Rees declares that 'the lot of prisoners is not a subject that normally arouses the interest of people in general', he is not, as he believes, simply recording an unfortunate and arbitrary feature of national consciousness, he is also describing the predictable result of years of Home Office secrecy and circumlocution. To talk of public lack of interest in prisons in such circumstances is tantamount to taking the populace to task for its lack of concern about the recent design of tactical nuclear warheads.

It is the prospect of loosening this suffocating Home Office grip which has led reformers to see great significance in recent legal challenges to its authority. In particular, the recent interventions of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, have intensified the invasion of British penal affairs which began three years ago with the Court's decision in the now famous Golder case.

Sydney Golder was a prisoner in Parkhurst in 1969. After a disturbance he was accused of attacking an officer even though other officers were willing to say that he'd been in another part of the prison. As he believed the charge was still recorded in his file, and might affect his parole chances, he decided to initiate a libel action against the officer responsible. But Golder couldn't go straight to a lawyer to see if he had grounds for proceedings; the Prison Rules laid down that he had first to petition the Home Secretary for permission, that is, to seek the approval of, and outline his reasons to, someone who was already party to the case. His petition was rejected. (It's difficult to know why: it is known however that remarks may be added by staff to passing petitions. The 'restricted' Governors' Handbook advises: 'By and large petitioners tend to omit various pieces of vital information and the writer (staff) of the report should be at pains to supply these'.

Golder claimed that the Home Office had violated Articles 6 and 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights. According to Article 6 'Everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law'. As Golder wasn't even allowed to see a lawyer how could he exercise such a right? Despite some legal choplogic from Government lawyers who claimed that the right to a fair trial did not include the actual right to have a trial, the court found for Golder. They also ruled that Prison Rule 34(8) which had prevented him from writing directly to a solicitor was a violation of Article 8 of the Convention which lays down that a public authority should not interfere with an individual's right to respect for his correspondence.

Anyone observing the principled manner in which the British Government has urged the Isle of Man to give up its birching practises following a European Court decision, might have hoped that a similar reforming zeal would be applied to its own derelictions. But the eventual response displayed just the sort of cynical legalism which characterised the defence at Strasbourg. The Home Office document which affected the changes was a 'restricted' circular instruction. It allowed inmates to seek legal advice so as to have proceedings initiated *unless* (and here the slowly opening door clanged shut again) *unless* the case arises 'out of or in connection with his imprisonment'. In these cases the complaint has to go through the normal existing channels, that is a petition to the Secretary of State. Lest there were any prison officers with lingering doubts about the Home Office's ability to circumvent Strasbourg, there was an explicitly reassuring footnote: 'By virtue of the arrangements explained above, it does not appear that staff should in practice feel at substantially any greater risk of involvement in litigation than now'.

That sounded like the end of the matter. But the Golder case had an unexpected side-effect. It brought home to prisoners and lawyers that the Home Office bureaucrats were vulnerable. They'd actually lost a case. All their customary secrecy and circumlocution could be confounded – even if only temporarily. So off everyone went again.

A set of eight complaints about interference with correspondence is now already past the 'admissibility' stage, and the Secretariat's readiness to place them together is read by some observers as an indication of the seriousness with which they are regarded. In particular, the cases will draw the Court's attention to the farcical provision that a prisoner may not write to an outsider not known to him before he went to prison. Favourite recent examples of correspondents who were ruled out as 'not previously known', include a doctor at Guys Hospital (the prisoner had written offering himself as a kidney donor) and the Archbishop of Canterbury (the prisoner requested moral guidance on his case).

The thought of defending similar nonsense in open court can hardly be tantalising Government lawyers. Certainly their attempts to argue for the inadmissibility of the cases earlier this year seemed somewhat despairing, at least when compared with the apparent meticulousness of their presentation of cases relating to the Prevention of Terrorism Act. All of which has given rise to the nasty suspicion that the Home Office might actually be hoping for another negative court decision over the censorship of correspondence and the inadequacy of their post-Golder changes in the Prison Rules. For although such a result might create some short-term international criticism, it might also provide a face-saving chance to ditch one of the more obviously indefensible features of the generally illiberal Prison Rules.

While tactical considerations may be helping to produce an unexpectedly easy victory for prisoners' rights in Strasbourg, the Home Office is facing another serious challenge to its traditional autonomy in the domestic courts. Historically it has had little to fear from this quarter. Case after case has been rejected on the grounds that neither the Prison Act nor the Prison Rules confer on the prisoner any rights which carry with them entitlement to compensation if they are violated. But in these post-Golder days more subtle means of levering open the prison system are being employed.

At the end of last year, a group of prisoners who had been involved in the Hull riot of 1976 and subsequently sentenced to lengthy losses of remission by the Board of Visitors, applied in the Queens Bench Division for an order of *certiorari*, argu-

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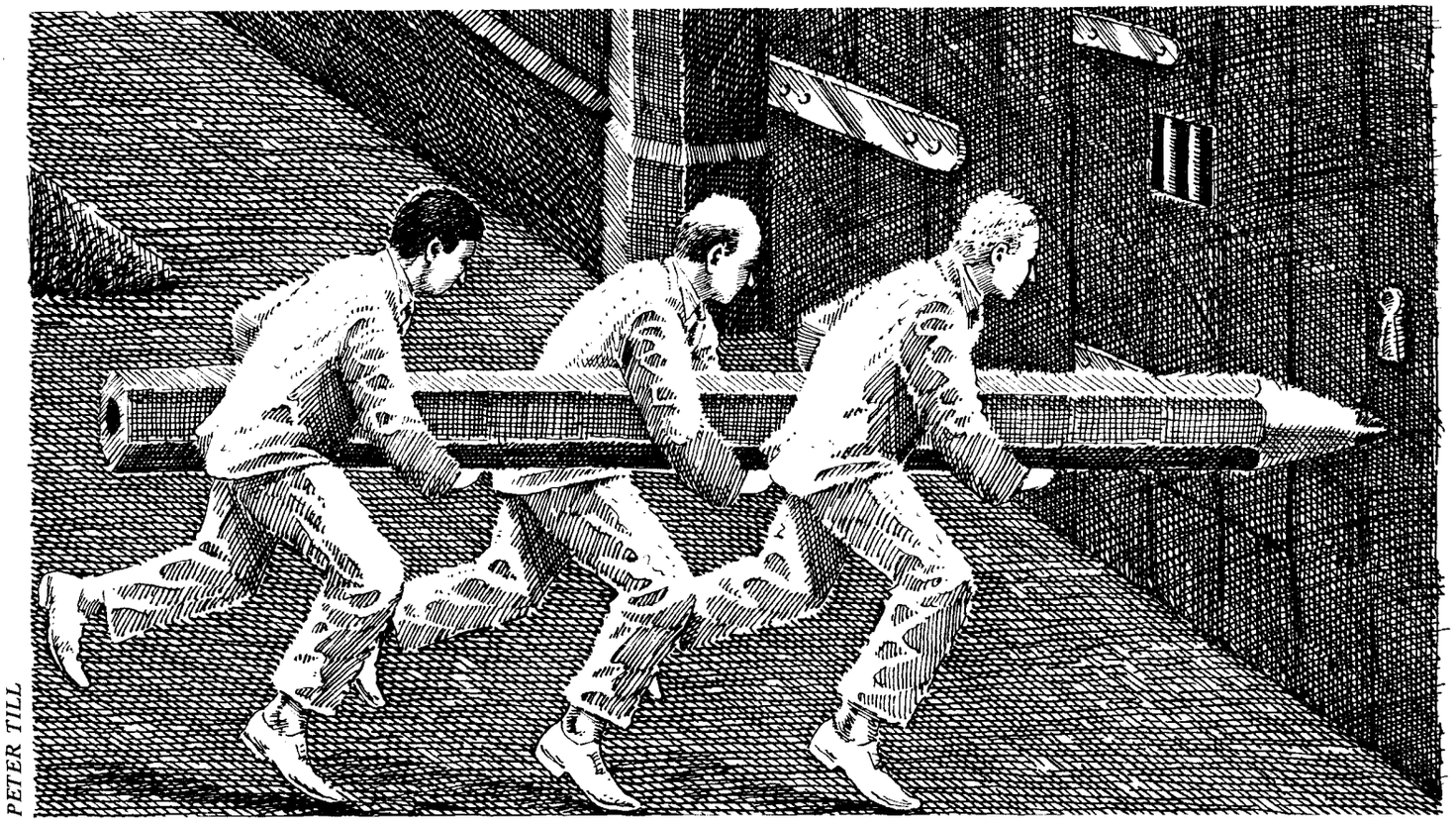

PETER TILL

ing that the Board of Visitors was acting in a judicial capacity and that therefore the rules of natural justice should apply to their hearings.

Initially, it seemed that a new and powerful way of imposing some minimal standards of fairness within prison might have been discovered. It certainly proved impossible for the judges to argue against the critical contention that the Board of Visitors was a judicial setting. As Lord Widgery conceded: 'I should have thought that there was no question but that this was a judicial act for present purposes'. But somehow the judges still managed to resist the compelling conclusion that the application should therefore be successful and the convictions quashed. Home Office embarrassment was finally spared by the Court's grateful reliance upon an expedient observation made by Lord Denning in 1972:

> If the court were to entertain actions by disgruntled prisoners, the governor's life would be made intolerable. The discipline of the prison would be undermined.

The temporary disappointment felt by civil rights lawyers over this failure has however now given way to a cautious optimism following the hearing of the appeal against the Queens Bench decision. Judgment has been reserved in this case until October but the court's awareness of several positive international precedents is thought to have done something to undermine the original decision. The 'political' assurance that a successful appeal would not open the 'floodgates', since boards of visitors deal with less than five per cent of all disciplinary hearings, may equally have strengthened the appellants' developing case.

The relatively esoteric nature of these legal battles in London and Strasbourg should not be allowed to conceal their importance. Taken together they constitute a most subtle and sustained attack upon the closed world of the prison. Considerable impetus was certainly provided by the Golder case which gave prisoners new hope and seems to have increased the number of lawyers prepared to devote their attention to prison matters. But in addition, there has been the critical influence of the growing number of politically articulate prisoners and the impact of radical organisations like PROP which broke new ground in the battle for openness with its public inquiry into the events following the Hull riot.

It is in fact the interpretation of these events at Hull which is likely to dominate penal discussion in the coming months. Thirteen prison officers will soon face charges of conspiracy to assault prisoners after the Hull riot, and although it is clearly not possible now to discuss the merits of the case, there is one background feature which is directly relevant to the general question of prison administration and the restriction placed upon the prisoners' access to lawyers. This is the matter of the 'Missing five months'. How was it that the police investigations not only failed to begin until five months after the alleged violence was said to have taken place, but were also only initiated when the Chief Constable of Humberside received a smuggled letter from a prisoner in Leeds prison? Were no earlier attempts made to initiate such proceedings, and if they were, was not their suppression a violation of Article 6 of the European Convention?

Dramatic statements from the Prison Officers' Association both before and after the charges were announced are a forceful reminder that there is always a third party involved in any debate about prison censorship, secrecy and human rights. Prison officers, as J. E. Thomas argues in the Heinemann volume, are understandably incensed at the way in which the prisoners' success in presenting themselves as victims deprived of rights, actually amplifies the image of their warders as repressive and insensitive.

But this increasing resentment from the POA, their refusal, for example, to cooperate with the Pentonville Wives' Group, their ban on BBC television crews, even the amazing statement by the chairman of the Association that the 'Association is determined to resist any attempt to make the due process of law and the administration of justice a means by which to attack our members' – none of this should allow prison officers to be cast as the principal obstacle to prisoners rights. Many of the weapons that they now employ to convey their present resentment have been historically fashioned for them by Home Office policies. They have been encouraged to regard the prisons as their property and the prisoners as their pawns by the traditional insistence that no-one outside the walls had any right to know what was going on within. If greater access to prisons already existed, then many of the POA's selective bans would be as ineffective as they would be pointless.

This is not to support present POA attitudes. The successful recruitment of so many of their members by the National Front shows how entrenched and reactionary their anti-prisoner attitudes have become. However it would be tragic if the present feelings of resentment among the actual inhabitants of our prisons were to degenerate into a battle between them. The resulting image of the Home Office standing innocently on the sidelines would be a perversion of this country's history of prison administration.

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Bruce Page: Careless doctors, meagre justice – a cautionary tale

On 2 July 1975 Mrs Stella Burnett entered the Whittington Hospital in North London for a sterilisation operation. She was thirty-three, in excellent health, and expected to be home with her children within two or three days.

But things went terribly wrong. She developed intestinal gangrene, suffered intense agony, and came very close to death. When she did leave hospital, after four months, it was with permanently impaired health: in the emergency operation which saved her life, nearly eight feet of small bowel was sacrificed, leaving her with little more than the minimum required to sustain existence. Among other unpleasant consequences, there is little prospect that Mrs Burnett (who is divorced) will be able to resume her profession as a secondary-school teacher.

While she lay in hospital – frequently delirious with pain – she became convinced that she was the victim, not merely of bad luck, but of serious mismanagement. It was, in part, the demeanour of doctors and nurses which convinced her. Having seemed to treat her at first as a hysterical trouble-maker, they became after a time extremely solicitous. One or two of them dropped hints suggesting their own disapproval of the way things had been done.

Mrs Burnett's conviction is scarcely unusual among hospital patients who come out worse than they went in. What is unusual is that she managed to do something about it. She sued, and a few days ago she received final payment in out-of-court settlement worth £36,000.

On the face of it, her case might seem like an advertisement for our system of compensation law. In truth, it is the reverse. Mrs Burnett's story shows that she only managed to beat the system because she had special connections, excellent luck, and substantial financial backing. Had she been without these advantages – as most people are – she would have got little or nothing.

The Royal Commission on Legal Services might usefully study Mrs Burnett's case. And it repays examination by anyone interested in the practical results of the ethical systems which rule the medical and legal professions: in particular, because it is a case which documents the pressures which can be used to prevent a doctor giving evidence critical of his colleagues.

Mrs Burnett's operation was carried out on Thursday 3 July by Mr John W. Eddy, a senior registrar at the Whittington. It was done by 'laparoscopy', a form of sterilisation then growing popular, in which a slim metal tube containing optical equipment is passed through the abdominal wall. The Fallopian tubes are identified visually, and the laparoscope contains remotely-controlled instruments which are used to cauterise them with an electric current. Performed correctly, laparoscopy causes much less abdominal disturbance than older methods of sterilisation, so that scarring can be minimal and recovery very rapid. Error, however, is possible: for instance, pieces of hot Fallopian tube may fall on and damage other interior organs.

Stella Burnett: Without good connections and great persistence, she would have been cheated by both the medical and legal professions.

On the night after her operation, Mrs Burnett felt recovered enough to make her way out of the ward to the lavatory – but fainted when she got there, with a sudden onset of agony. The night nurse was unimpressed, gave her some aspirin, and told her that she must 'expect a little pain'. Next day, Friday 4 July, when she ought to have been going home, she was much worse. Visiting her, her husband, Mr Piers Burnett – they had not yet separated – found her sweating heavily, with a distended belly. He was told that tests were being taken because of blood in her urine, but that results would not appear for four days because the laboratory did not work at weekends. When he suggested that some urgency might be in order, one of the nursing staff – aiming, perhaps, at sarcasm, but achieving a grim touch of irony – said: 'What do you want us to do? Open her up?'

Mrs Burnett was visited at close intervals on Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday by her husband and various friends – all of whom concluded, with alarm, that her condition was worsening. According to the doctors and nurses, however, she just had 'paralytic ileus', an unimportant complaint which would soon correct itself. On Monday 7 July, after some insistence, Mr Burnett managed to see John Eddy, the surgeon, who confirmed this diagnosis, saying that paralytic ileus was merely a temporary 'seizing-up' of the ordinary actions of the gut. It was normal after any substantial abdominal operation, though admittedly unusual after laparoscopy. Mr Burnett raised the question of a second, exploratory operation – his wife having gathered from one or two remarks that it might be under consideration. Mr Eddy said that it was out of the question.

Next day Mr Burnett was telephoned at 9.15, told that his wife was having an operation, and that he should come at once. He saw her before she went into the theatre, but was told she would not recover from the anaesthetic until the afternoon. At 5 p.m. he was telephoned by Mr Eddy, from whom he gained the impression that a fairly routine operation had been conducted to remove a bowel obstruction. Returning to the hospital at 7 p.m., he was seen by a doctor who had assisted at the operation, who informed him that his wife was seriously ill, and that her chances of survival might be no better than fifty-fifty.

Considerably later, inquiry revealed what had occurred in the operating theatre. Mr Eddy and a consultant gynaecologist named Miss Coles had made an exploratory incision: they found a major intestinal blockage, with extensive gangrene, and a loop of small intestine stuck to the abdominal wall. Perceiving that special skills were required, they summoned Mr Paul Savage, a surgeon on the Whittington staff, who is an authority on abdominal surgery – and who luckily was available. In the words of one specialist who later examined Mrs Burnett: 'Mr Savage was presented with a very difficult problem indeed technically'. By common consent, the saving of the patient's life was due to the skill with which he removed the gangrenous bowel and stitched together the healthy tissue remaining.

As soon as she was aware of what was happening, Mrs Burnett became determined to discover who, if anyone, was responsible for her misfortunes. The doctors, however, generally took the same line as the one who saw her husband on the night after the operation: that 'it was all very unfortunate, but it was past'. At private expense, Mr Burnett called in a consultant, who merely issued assurances that 'everything was being done necessary for her complete recovery' – though 'complete recovery' was by this time impossible – and added that 'patience' would 'greatly assist the medical staff in their management of the situation.'

After her discharge in autumn 1975, Mrs Burnett found herself in the classic condition of a victim of medical mishap: physically exhausted, and in very low morale. However, she would not give up without

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further investigation, and although her marriage had now disintegrated, her husband promised to pay for legal costs. (This was necessary: as he had left her with their house, and was paying £50 a week for her and the two children, Mrs Burnett was not eligible for any useful legal aid.)

She was aided by the fact that through Piers Burnett's work as a publisher she knew a number of journalists and other people – including myself and my wife – who were able to advise her about the realities of the legal system and the National Health Service. The first, most difficult question was where to turn for totally reliable, independent medical advice: something in which most claimants have to take pot luck. Here a vital breakthrough came from Dr Oliver Gillie, medical correspondent of the *Sunday Times,* who suggested that her solicitors should get a specialist report from Mr Peter Hawley, a consultant at St Mark's Hospital. In November 1975 Mr Hawley examined Mrs Burnett, and wrote a report – admittedly rather complex – which the solicitors sent in December to a barrister named Stephen Toulmin for assessment.

Mr Toulmin's response was not encouraging. He thought that Mrs Burnett might be able to claim something for bad nursing, but that otherwise her case was not formidable. A few days later, in January 1976, Mrs Burnett's solicitors passed to her a letter from the legal adviser to the North East Thames Regional Health Authority, which stated that 'having regard to expert opinion', he had no hesitation in denying liability in the matter.

Most claimants would have had to surrender at this stage. In order to count the odds which Mrs Burnett had to overcome in turning this apparently minor – even worthless – claim into one worth £36,000, it is necessary to grasp the predicament in which the legal system places people like her, and the extent to which the idea of 'equality before the law' is a particularly hollow fiction in compensation matters.

Typically, the claimant is an *individual,* sick, unhappy, legally inexperienced, and deeply worried about money. Opposed are *corporate bodies*: largely free of mortal stress; commanding much experience, and funds which are by comparison infinite. In this case, Mrs Burnett was suing the Area Health Authority and, nominally, the surgeon John Eddy – but behind Mr Eddy, the real defendant was the Medical Defence Union, essentially an insurance organisation protecting doctors against the effect of suits for damages.

Even in its exploratory phases, a medical lawsuit can cost several thousand pounds: serious to an individual, trivial to a corporation. It is always worthwhile for the corporation to spend something on a defence, however worthless, for a large number of claimants will run out of money and stamina, and this keeps down the general level of settlements. The claimant, however, gambles once-for-all on an issue of vital importance. He or she is in the position of an ordinary citizen forced to play for one night in a poker-school run by rich professional gamblers.

The first step Mrs Burnett had to take was to set aside the advice of her barrister, Mr Toulmin, as being of little worth. I was able, though with some trepidation, to help her here: because I had been involved in the *Sunday Times* thalidomide case some years before, and in investigating other pieces of litigation, I had acquired some knowledge of the ways of compensation lawyers. Mrs Burnett asked me to go with her to her interview with Mr Toulmin and, with a little more experience to go on, I supported her view that he had not mastered all the complexities of the specialist's report. He had fastened on a phrase saying there was 'no evidence that the operation was carried out in any way but a competent manner', and did not seem to have thought through the reasons why such evidence might be lacking. He spent much of the interview counselling Mrs Burnett at her own expense, against 'vindictiveness', arousing much ire in her.

After carefully examining the papers, and consulting a medical dictionary, Mrs Burnett and I sought an interview with the specialist, Mr Hawley, in March 1976. This was very fruitful: Mr Hawley confirmed our reading of his report, which was that Mrs Burnett had not been suffering from the essentially trivial complaint of 'paralytic ileus', but from an intensely dangerous intestinal blockage, and that the difference should have been apparent to any competent doctor.

Death, and gangrene, of several feet of small bowel had been caused by stoppage of its blood-supply. This might have been

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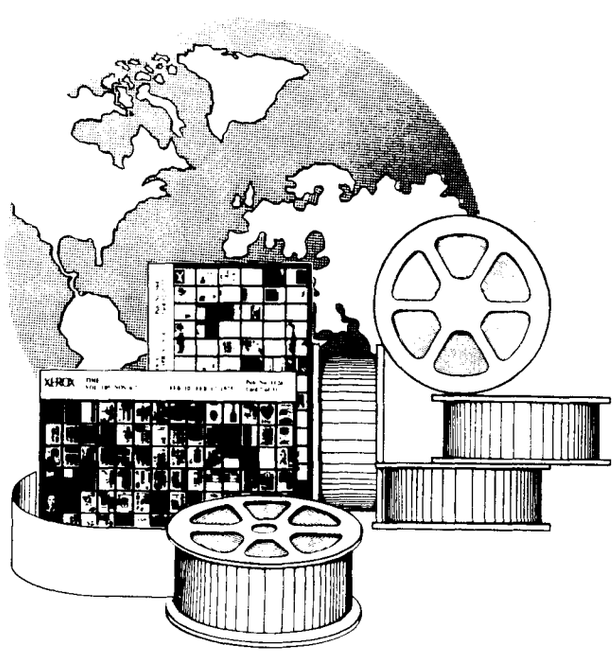

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caused by damage to a blood-vessel during the operation – in which case the whole length would have died within hours – or it might have arisen just afterwards, through spontaneous twisting of the gut – in which case the ill-effects would have arisen little-by-little. In either case, there should have been a much earlier exploratory operation – which either would have brought out plain evidence of a bad operation, or would have enabled repairs to be done before the damage was serious. As it was, delay had guaranteed that the result would be destructive whatever the cause.

This seemed to be a strong, though slightly complex case. It was now necessary for Mrs Burnett to summon up the confidence to make a gamble on it. She felt that she could not do so on advice rendered by Mr Toulmin or any other counsel simply provided by her solicitors. After taking a good deal of informal advice from experienced lawyers, I suggested that she ask for Mr David Sullivan, QC – partly because I had seen him in action on the other side during the thalidomide affair, and had formed a lively impression of his faculties. Having survived difficulties which would have demolished a complainant lacking inside advice, Mrs Burnett came up against another classic problem: that of finance.

To consult a QC is expensive. But Mrs Burnett's modest means – described earlier – were enough to put her, along with the larger part of the British population, outside the benefits of civil legal aid. ('Benefit' may not be the right word in this context, for the position of a legal aid client trying to change barristers is not easy. As a Law Society official once explained, it is not the purpose of legal aid to place the ordinary citizen in the same position as a rich man.)

The crucial intervention in the case was now made by her ex-husband's colleague, the publisher André Deutsch. He said that he would make any necessary and reasonable loan to mount the case – for repayment in the event of success. Few people, naturally, have access to such assistance.

A conference was now arranged to include the specialist, Mr Hawley, the QC, Mr Sullivan, and the complainant herself. It began a little stiffly: as an observer, I was confirmed in my impression that barristers do not much approve of clients who have fired other barristers. However, as it went on I was as much impressed as was Mrs Burnett with the manner in which Mr Sullivan drew out and tested Mr Hawley's evidence: and also with the firmness with which Mr Hawley made clear both his reluctance to testify against another doctor, and his firm conviction that it was his duty to do so if mistreatment had occurred. Clearly, what chiefly moved him was that correct diagnosis could scarcely have been avoided if proper notice had been taken of the pain that Mrs Burnett was suffering.

Having made use of *two* specialists and *two* barristers, Mrs Burnett now had a very fair idea – seven months after the event – of what had been done to her. She also had a cautious, but obviously well-considered estimate from Mr Sullivan that she might be entitled to substantial (though still unspecified) damages. But this was only a beginning: as the months of 1976 wore on, her solicitors were employed in seeking further evidence. In particular, Mr Sullivan wanted to know the views of Mr Paul Savage, the surgeon who had saved Mrs Burnett's life. If he agreed with Peter Hawley, a good case would become almost irresistible. But if he were likely to give evidence on the other side, the case would be seriously weakened.

In autumn 1976 Mrs Burnett's solicitors made contact with Mr Savage – and the initial results were very striking indeed. On 5 November 1976 he wrote to them from the Whittington Hospital (emphasis added):

> Thank you for your letters of October 8th and October 27th re Mrs Stella BURNETT. You ask me to give you a medical report about this patient. Such a medical report would involve me in very heavy criticism of two of my colleagues at the Whittington Hospital and this I do not wish to do. However, *justice must be done and I am sure your client has an unanswerable case.* To help you in the management of this I would be prepared to see Mr Peter Hawley and, possibly, a representative of your firm: go through the notes and the events leading up to the catastrophe so that the actual facts of the case are perfectly plain. This would also give you some idea of the sort of evidence I should give in the unlikely event of this case ever coming to Court . . .

Mr Savage was very helpful to the lawyers as their inquiries proceeded – at the customary dignified pace – during late 1976 and early 1977. In a letter of 5 January he said that he did not feel that he could write a report on the case, but that he 'would . . . be prepared to sign a statement by you, stating that *in my opinion she had been negligently treated*' (emphasis added).

Then, on 26 April 1977 came a letter with a sharp change of attitude. Having dealt with a couple of technical queries, Mr Savage wrote that he had just discussed the case with Miss Coles (the consultant who had commenced the emergency operation together with John Eddy):

> She seemed very surprised that the matter had not already been settled out of court. She got in touch with the Medical Defence Union, and again confirmed that there is no intention of defending this case. I later rang Dr John Wall of the Medical Defence Union, who told me that this was, in fact, the case. He also expressed surprise that you should have approached me for an opinion of this case. He said that he thought it was probably improper for you to have done so. It certainly puts me in the very invidious position of criticising my colleagues at the hospital.

Effectively, this marked the end of the considerable help which Mr Savage had given. Very clearly, it is the letter of a man who feels himself under some pressure, and it is not surprising that the signed statement was never forthcoming. But what is most striking is the revelation that both Miss Coles and Mr Savage were under the impression that Mrs Burnett's lawyers needed no further help – *because the MDU had 'no intention of defending the case.'*

Possibly, the Medical Defence Union had no intention of fighting any further. But if so, the decision had not been recorded in the only way that could have made it significant – namely, by admission to Stella Burnett and her lawyers. Whatever transpired between Dr Wall and Mr Savage, the legal reality was that the Medical Defence Union was still contesting the case, and it was not until September 1977 – nearly three months after Mr Savage's unhappy letter – that the Union's lawyers conceded in principle a willingness to pay compensation. Even then they did not admit formal liability, and even then they specified no sum.

Mrs Burnett's solicitors fired off an angry letter to the solicitors for the Medical Defence Union. At the end of June, they received a reply saying that Dr Wall had never intended to accuse them of impropriety, and that his conversation with Mr Savage must have been 'misinterpreted'. Dr Wall's version was that he had done no more than point out to Mr Savage that

> many surgeons found it invidious to be called upon to act as advisers on matters of opinion arising from the facts when they had taken over the conduct of the case from a colleague whose treatment was the subject of criticism.

Not surprisingly – as the letters came from solicitors still actively defending – there was no light cast on the question of how Mr Savage acquired the idea that defence had been abandoned. The letters give a sharp insight into the difficulties faced by anyone needing to collect evidence about medical misfortunes: even a doctor who feels that 'justice must be done' is apt to be disconcerted by professional pressures, and the effect is worsened by the fact that doctors appear systematically to misunderstand the working of the legal system.

In medical fact, a case like Mrs Burnett's may be 'unanswerable' from the first – but that does not prevent the Medical Defence Union and the Area Health Authority maintaining a bold bargaining front for three years or more. (It would be interesting to know on what 'expert opinion' the Authority relied in denying liability to Mrs Burnett.) In such cases, the real question is not whether *some* damages will be paid, but whether the amount will be trivial or adequate. In other words, the process is not one of clear-cut decision, but of protracted manoeuvre, in which the critical question is the confidence of the plaintiff's side in the quality of evidence it can command. It was a gain in confidence to Mrs Burnett's side to have Mr Savage's co-operation: it was a blow to confidence to lose it.

Obviously, the loss was not fatal, as Mr Hawley's evidence remained unshaken. And Mrs Burnett is reasonably satisfied with total compensation, paid this summer, of £36,375 – as against £42,000 to which her counsel calculated she ought to be entitled. Whether she might have got the full amount had the evidence developed otherwise is impossible to say. What is really disturbing about the case is that she required special information, private financial backing – and, it may be said, unusual personal determination – in order to get within striking distance of the proper amount. And, whatever formal evidence may be given to the Royal Commission on Legal Services, anyone reasonably familiar with compensation law, especially its medical aspects, will agree that the only remarkable features of her story are its relatively fortunate ending, and the fact that it can be documented.

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Istanbul, May Day 1977. Thirty-nine trade unionists die after a rally is fired on.

Christopher Hitchens: The Grey Wolves: Turkey faces fascism

Turkey must be the only country in Europe where a policemen's union plasters the walls with appeals for action against right-wing terrorism. And not without reason. At the other end of the Mediterranean, democratic socialism is fighting for its life. In Turkey, a reformist government is being menaced by organised fascist violence, by Islamic reaction and by the International Monetary Fund. The developed nations of Europe seem content, Left or Right, to see this happen and to plan their 'new economic order' as if their own sneezes came before the pneumonia of others. This is a pity, and could stop Turkey from becoming a developed nation; driving it instead towards the unstable, sect-ridden and bankrupt future which threatens now.

The fascists are the most obvious and dramatic threat. Two people a day, on average, have been murdered so far this year. A few weeks ago, at the University of Ankara, Professor Bedrettin Comert was shot down as he left his home. He had been investigating the activities of armed right-wing goons on campus. At about the time of his death, the toll of murders in 1978 passed the 300 mark (which makes the Red Brigades, for instance, look small time). To call the assassins fascist is, in this case, hardly a hyperbole. Their leader, a Turkish Cypriot named Colonel Turkes, was imprisoned during the last war for pro-Nazi activities. His pan-Turkish ideology is based on a racist theory which holds that all the white peoples of the world are descended from the Turks, and that Turkey must take its rightful place as a superstate. Government inquiries have shown that members of his National Action Party and its youth commando group – the 'Grey Wolves' – are the prime culprits in the racking political terror.

The intention of the fascist campaign is to provoke the Turkish army into doing again what it did between 1971 and 1973 – seizing power and extinguishing the Left and the unions. Until this spring, Colonel Turkes was deputy Prime Minister in a coalition government of not very fastidious conservatives and Muslim traditionalists. He utilised his party position to infiltrate supporters into the police, the bureaucracy and the education system. It is this threat, and the resistance to it, which provides the immediate battleground. The formation of an anti-fascist police organisation, startling in itself, is a symptom of what many socialists see as the failure of the social democratic Ecevit government to be tough enough. Very few people of the Left, however, think that the army will come back. It lost immense prestige during its last intervention, which was both extremely brutal and outstandingly inept. The Americans, too, whose support in these matters is essential, are not as keen on military dictatorships in the Mediterranean as once they were. Experience has been a hard teacher. The lifting of the arms embargo is linked to good behaviour on this front. In any case, the army has considerable power as things stand.

It is the largest in NATO; it has a veto on various policy questions (Kurdish minority grievances, for instance, cannot be raised legally in Turkey because they threaten 'the unity of the nation', and the Turkish Workers Party was banned in 1971 for trying). It effectively controls the northern half of Cyprus as a right-wing fiefdom. It retains the power, through military courts, to try civilian dissidents and still holds a few dozen political prisoners from the last coup. It also controls an enormous slice of Turkish capital and business. The bizarrely-named Armed Forces Mutual Fund (OYAK) has assets of £89 m and is the third largest conglomerate in the country. Large chunks of the Goodyear and International Harvester plants, for instance, belong to it. It is financed by a ten per cent levy on the pay of the 80,000 officers and extends through cement, property, petrol and vehicle manufacturing to provide considerable returns for the officer class.

This is not the only thing about Turkey which is reminiscent of Latin America. The whole economy is very conservative and under-developed and it is this which gives weight to the second challenge to reformism – Islam. The smallholders and petit-bourgeois of backward Anatolia vote heavily for the National Salvation Party, another rightist formation in the recent part-fascist coalition. These forces fear change and modernisation, loathe the idea of Turkey entering the Common Market, and inveigh against the filthy designs of Christian Greece. As elsewhere, the Muslim community is split; between the Sunnis and, in Turkey's case, the Alevis. These feuds make fertile fishing grounds for the Right and for religious demagogues. It has been widely alleged in the Turkish press that the Shah of Iran, too, is interesting himself by supporting a Kurdish faction in the south-eastern provinces. Certainly, a radical and secular Turkey would not be to his taste, and he has stirred Kurds before. The rightist violence, however, is probably not of his making. Colonel Turkes has made the pilgrimage to Mecca but he despises non-Turks to the point of non-cooperation. (Fascist internationalism has never been a very sturdy growth).

But it is the economic crisis which fuels the violence of the Right and the fears of the Muslim faithful. The fascists now have a million votes, where they had a handful only a few years ago, because unemployment is *twenty per cent*. 'Thank God', a former social democratic finance minister said to me, 'that many of those are in docile rural areas'. He shouldn't be so optimistic. The figure does not include the million or so Turkish migrant workers who are exported to stoke the boilers of the EEC, and whose returned savings are used to buy exorbitant foreign exchange on the black market. Turkish migrant workers who are exported division of labour, and its industrialists are just too weak to risk much foreign competition. So, bearing in mind that the population has quadrupled in the fifty years since

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the Republic was formed, and that a version of democracy has been in force since 1960, it is not surprising that the country has overspent heavily to keep going.

Which is where the IMF came in. After all other sources of foreign credit gave out, the IMF imposed the conditions for its 'certificate of good housekeeping'. These were unsurprisingly monetarist. A halt to public expenditure, a freeze on public salaries, a general wage limit elsewhere and an agreement to keep the price of agricultural produce low. The result: a depressed home market, a greater disparity in incomes, widespread misery and – still no new lines of real credit. Bulent Ecevit, the social democratic Prime Minister, accused the IMF when he was in opposition of imposing conditions suitable for 'rich developed countries or those able to use force of arms to impose sacrifices on their people'. At one point, even the President of the Republic, an ancient admiral, expressed concern at the way in which lower-income groups were being forced to meet the cost of the payments crisis.

Conspiracy and collusion apart, it seems obvious that there is some connection between the million fascist votes and the unemployment and confusion among the less-educated classes. It is noticeable, too, that Colonel Turkes does better where there are sectarian religious clashes. The problems is that social democracy, with its heavy orientation to Western Europe (especially West Germany) and its near-total dependence on the IMF, cannot seem to take the bold measures that might turn the tide. Its latest response has been to commit the militia to the streets, where they can be seen roaring around by the jeepload showing the flag, with no discernible effect on the threshold of violence. Ecevit is also crippled by his Achilles heel in Cyprus, where the policy of military occupation and colonisation has antagonised most potential allies (even, until last month, the tender-hearted Jimmy Carter). The same Cyprus policy, with its high cost in subsidy and petrol, is also a great drain on the treasury, and its compensating appeal to national chauvinism is a wasting asset. Turkey's clash with Greece in the Aegean is also exacerbated by her poverty – there is oil in the Aegean and Turkey, which has no energy resources of its own, is paying $125m. each week for oil imports alone.

Further tests are ahead. Ecevit has promised to legalise the Communist Party; banned under a section of the penal code which prohibits class warfare (the fascists, of course, have no difficulty in evading this). But here again, the enemies of the Left have so far been strong enough to discourage him. Having up to now withstood the pressures of fascism, of ultra-orthodoxy and of the IMF, Ecevit's party now faces the final enemy; its own political weakness. In the next few years, a European country could be going the way of Iran or Pakistan. Or it could break through to a quasi-socialist and secular development. This may be putting the dilemma a bit crudely, but really the European Left should be paying more attention.

Duncan Campbell: Welsh language guerrillas win some battles in a long war

The most vociferous opposition to the official line at the Cardiff Eistedfodd this week has come from the young activists of *Cymdeithas yr Iath Gymraeg* (Welsh Language Society). In recent years this group has proved a point which politicians find unpalatable: direct action works. From outside Wales its activities have been portrayed as isolated acts of hooliganism. However, Monday's incident involving the destruction of the British Rail stand at the Eistedfodd, the opposition to the investiture of the Prince of Wales, the daubing and erasure of monolingual roadsigns and persistent guerrilla action against television transmitters – all have been part of a sincere and well-articulated political campaign.

The campaign is for the Welsh language, and also for Welsh culture, community and socialism. The movement for Welsh nationalism has grown considerably in the last 15 years, and *Cymdeithas yr Iath* has often been the vanguard for more respectable political activity, such as that of the national party, *Plaid Cymru*. The movement is aimed at overturning some of the effects of centuries of English domination, a process in which survival of culture is less an end in itself than a key means to economic and social reform.

The campaign has had successes, including last month's announcement that a fourth TV channel for Wales (in Welsh) would go ahead. Ironically this statement shortly followed an unsuccessful prosecution of two members of the society's senate for conspiracy to damage TV installations.

The plan for the fourth television channel is only one in a series of items that the Welsh Office is anxious to proclaim as Labour faces a perilous time at the polls. (*Plaid Cymru*, although still small, has won surprising local success in the South Wales valleys, a traditional Labour stronghold.) Another such offering has of course been the Wales Devolution Act, now law, which will establish a Welsh assembly in Cardiff – subject to a referendum yet to take place. In addition, there are grants to the National Eistedfodd; two Welsh pre-school nursery playgroups; and the final report of the Council for the Welsh Language, issued at the end of June, which startled even the activists with a forthright statement that Wales should become a bilingual society, and a call for immediate official financial support for measures to restore the language. The report was well received. But it was promptly placed on the shelf to await the arrival of a Welsh Assembly to act on its recommendations.

The campaign for the Welsh language is the result of four centuries of 'internal colonisation' by England, accelerated in the last hundred years by the effective homogenisation of peoples and cultures demanded by the capitalist market economy. Welsh speakers still form about 20 per cent of the population, but their numbers have been on the decline because of the prevalence of English, and the infiltration and destruction of Welsh-speaking communities, due largely to English speaking immigrants. To be able to speak English was – until recently – the *sine qua non* of any ambitious Welsh, and this had been reinforced by the barbarous practice of 'Welsh Nots' – a wooden block worn round the neck, intended to disgrace a child caught speaking Welsh at school. Wales itself had no separate constitutional identity from England until the 1960s, and even now it is inevitably governed in accordance with the larger and sometimes conflicting interests of the British state.

As the language has been the evident victim of these pressures, its resurgence is accordingly important to economic and political change sought by *Cymdeithas yr Iath* and *Plaid Cymru*. Both movements are generally socialist, although they do not always use the term. Some fondly quote Jean-Paul Sartre's reflections on the *Basque* struggle: 'For a Basque to speak his own language is a revolutionary act.' For the Welsh to speak their own language again would be the first and basic step, they hope, of the reversal of English colonisation, and the establishment of a socialist society.

The preservation of local Welsh speaking communities is threatened by the economic power of the English, in the purchase of second homes or simply in outbidding local residents for private housing resources. Local authorities and language campaigners have attacked the second home trade as far as possible. One of the language movement offshoots, the Gwynedd Housing Association (*Cymdeithas Tai Gwynedd*) is specifically aiming to save the communities by a direct reversal of the process. The Association purchases and renovates the existing housing stock, and then accommodates Welsh speaking families – the addition of a few young adults and children is enough to keep the local school and shop open, and ensure the survival of the community.

Both *Plaid Cymru* and the direct action campaign of the language movement have roots in the 1920s and 30s. Plaid was formed in 1925, a year before the restoration of the gold standard ended coal exports and put Wales into a twenty-year depression. The first act of insurrection against England was in 1935, when a new bombing school was burned as a protest against Welsh communities being ousted by the military.

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However, the next substantial move did not come until 20 years later, when Liverpool Corporation put a bill through parliament to have a reservoir built at Tryweryn in Merioneth, involving the evacuation and flooding of the village of the same name. The water was required to service the growing Merseyside industrial conurbation. No Welsh MP supported the bill, and the project met widespread hostility throughout Wales. *Plaid Cymru* abstained from direct action, after considerable debate, and the reservoir was built. But the incident blew the whistle on the claims of Welsh parliamentarians that the hope of Wales was to return people of their calibre to Westminster.

The next initiative came from Saunders Lewis, the playwright and lecturer who had been charged with conspiracy after the 1935 protest against the military. In a celebrated 1962 radio lecture on the 'Fate of the Language' he charged that *Plaid Cymru* had failed to work for the defence of the language: 'To restore the Welsh language in Wales is nothing less than a revolution. Only revolutionary methods will succeed'. The lecture secured his future as a folk hero of the Welsh nation, and led to the founding a year later of *Cymdeithas yr Iath Cymraeg*. It carries on the tradition of direct action which first flourished among the nuclear disarmament activists; other groups have long since abandoned such tactics.

The sustained campaign has had a direct effect on Welsh speakers themselves, creating a new determination to stay Welsh. It has brought about some acceptance (by no means total) of the methods used. Court appearances for refusing to comply with some monolingual English process, such as tax or TV licensing, or for painting out or removing monolingual roadsigns are so commonplace that the legal system has lost its power to intimidate. The numbers involved in the campaigns are substantial enough; in the 1970s, over two hundred people have been taken to court, and some imprisoned, over TV licence protests. At least the same number have put their names to a variety of activities against the broadcasting authorities.

The first campaign by the language society was a small but successful token of their plans. Their demand for a bilingual road tax disc was refused and a host of offenders prosecuted until 600 people signed a declaration that they would not display the monolingual disc. The 'practical difficulties' which the authorities claimed were insuperable in introducing bilingual discs were quickly overcome. Similar campaigns for bilingual forms from other public authorities quickly followed. But a key question was the legal status of the Welsh language.

In short, the language had no legal status, as a 1963 official report on the language observed. Wales had been conquered by England in the 16th century, and laws relating to the union had required that the English government 'utterly extirpe alle the sinister usages and customes' of Wales. It was clearly laid down that English would be the language of those in official positions, and in the courts. With the growing nationalist pressure, this situation was reviewed, and a 1965 report (incidentally the last official report concerning Welsh language or culture not to have been published in Welsh) recommended legal status for the language. The Welsh Language Act was duly passed in 1967.

The most celebrated campaign of *Cymdeithas yr Iath Gymraeg* concerned English roadsigns, whose prominence and unavoidability in daily life made them a suitable target. The 'daubing' – painting out of offending signs – became famous and is still in evidence. The society periodically organised the collection and dumping of destroyed or painted signs on the steps of courts and local authority offices. Between two and three hundred people went to court over such offences. In 1971, the increasing involvement of prominent people and the presentation of a petition allowed the government gracefully to accede to the pressure and appoint a committee to investigate the matter. In 1972, the Bowen committee recommended bilingual signs throughout Wales, with Welsh given precedence.

Bilingual signs are now the rule rather than the exception, and there is no denying that the change was won as a result of the direct action by the language society. As in previous and subsequent campaigns, the activities involved were often initially seen as unduly fierce and hooliganesque. But since they were based on solid political issues, broad support followed, more traditional initiatives were eventually taken by 'respectable' figures and politicians, and the government went into action.

The campaign for Welsh broadcasting has run for ten years. A fully Welsh channel for Wales, under the control of a Welsh Broadcasting Authority, is now promised by the present government – although not until 1982, and then only for three hours a day. In the early 70s, many campaign members and sympathisers refused to pay for TV licences until a fully Welsh channel was planned. A campaign against the broadcasting authorities led to yet one more conspiracy trial, and four key figures were sent to prison. But the initiative once again entered the mainstream of traditional politics in 1973, when the Lord Mayor of Cardiff instigated a conference of Welsh organisations, which called for a fourth

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channel. This had followed an enormously active three-month campaign of disruption.

Again, the idea won approval in the reports of three successive government committees which examined broadcasting in Wales, in reports from 1974 up to last year's Annan report. But nothing was done to implement the recommendations; in the meantime, the government found time to plan for and implement an English TV service for the British Army of the Rhine, which would serve a linguistic minority group about one third the size of the Welsh speaking population, at equal or greater cost. Last year, *Cymdeithas yr Iath* resolved to intensify their campaign by destroying broadcasting equipment, a policy implemented for the first (and only) time at the Blaen Plwyf station near Aberystwyth last February. The present conspiracy charges against the current and immediate past chairmen of the society, Rhoddri Williams and Wynfford James, result directly from this incident. A good section of the nationalist movement is in active or passive sympathy with them and the refusal of the Carmarthen jury to return a verdict may be evidence of the same support. The reported determination by Welsh Office authorities that the two should be retried highlights fears that the rule of law may be undermined if the nationalist movement continues its success with direct action.

Such politics are revolutionary – not, as Plaid spokesman Emrys Roberts said, 'guns and violence, but responsible, direct action outside the ambit of normal respectable British party politics'. *Plaid*, he suggested, could have decided to back *Cymdeithas yr Iath* all the way, and accept the inevitable polarisation, or to evolve as a traditional political party. It has chosen the latter and might in time succeed Labour as the natural party of government in Wales.

Plaid Cymru has a manifesto at least as left-wing as the Labour Party. But the word 'socialism' can now be translated into Welsh with two separate meanings distinguishing the Labour corporate industrial state from other socialist ideas: *sosialaeth*, the common translation of 'socialism' – and *cymdeithasiaeth*, an 'ism' derived from the Welsh for society or community. *Cymdeithasiaeth* was a term first used by Welsh interpreters of early communist literature, and has been readopted by *Cymdeithas yr Iath* to signify that the fight to preserve Welsh is not separate from the emancipation of the Welsh working class. For their part, Welsh socialists are able to reject the simple economism that places their struggle simply at the level of the relations of production.

A section of the Labour Party, including notable left wingers like Neil Kinnock, still reject Welsh nationalism in favour of broader class solidarity, and have opposed plans for a Welsh assembly. At the grassroots of the party, however, a different view is held, indicated by such developments as the new significance of the Welsh TUC.

The Labour anti-nationalists' point, not without justification, to the rise of a new class within the nationalist movement, a Cardiff based Welsh speaking professional elite whose fortunes will rise with the language revival. Cardiff has its own version of Hampstead, and *Plaid Cymru*'s attempts to widen its social, as well as geographical, basis of support do not allay suspicions that a party which sees England as the principal enemy of the Welsh will fail to recognise a new class of rulers arising within itself.

Those on the left of *Plaid Cymru*, whose main representative is Merioneth MP Dafydd Elis Thomas, hope to engineer a nation without the worst aspects of the nation state, and above all to avoid transferring a London administration unaltered to Cardiff. Plaid are poised to make a further evolutionary step in the general election, perhaps prising one or two further seats from the Labour machine. They should be a major party in the putative Welsh Assembly. At present, their politicians have a public ambivalence towards *Cymdeithas yr Iath*, recognising their successes without subscribing to their methods. Many of the present party workers and local councillors have in fact come from the activists' ranks. In the future, the continuing and evolving traditions of direct action make it unlikely that Welsh politics will lose its sharp edge.

A Special Correspondent: Taking our heroes as we find them

A nation needs its quota of heroes. If none exist some must be made up out of whole-cloth. Lincoln the Great Emancipator was also the man who said: 'I am not nor ever have been in favour of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races'. But everybody conspires to accentuate the positive in such cases otherwise no country will have any heroes at all, which is unthinkable. Sri Lanka's latest hero, newly canonised, is Edward (Eddie) Henry Pedris who, according to Prime Minister R. Premadasa 'sacrificed his life to free the country from the imperialist yoke'.

But Eddie Pedris was no freedom fighter or anti-British rebel. He was, on the contrary, very much of the colonial Establishment, a Major in the British army of occupation. The son of a wealthy tradesman, his ambition was eventually to take over his father's business. There is no evidence at all that he had any wish to 'free the country from the imperialist yoke'. His entire class benefited from and desired the continuation of the British occupation. How, then, did Eddie Pedris become a hero of national independence?

In June 1915 there were outbreaks of civil commotion in many parts of the country. Miscalled 'riots', they were not in the least 'anti-British' but were, rather, armed skirmishes between Sinhalese Buddhists and Moor Muslims, the Sinhalese being mainly the aggressors. The Governor Sir Robert Chalmers panicked and declared a state of emergency and imposed martial law. He ordered the arrest and imprisonment of many prominent Sinhalese (among them D. S. Senanayake, who became the first Prime Minister of independent Ceylon) who were engaged in nothing more menacing to the British raj than a temperance campaign.

Eddie Pedris, in command of a unit of the Home Guard, was accused by some British policemen of having sided with the Sinhalese and fired a shot at a crowd injuring a Moor. He was tried before a court martial on a charge of treason, no less. The evidence against him was so tenuous as to be virtually non-existent. But the British badly needed (or thought they did) to make an example of somebody prominent and Pedris filled the bill. He was found guilty and condemned to death by shooting. He was 27 years old.

Pedris died bravely and with dignity. Fastidiously declining the handkerchief he was offered by the superintendent of the prison he produced his own clean one and bandaged his eyes with it. Then he calmly announced: 'I am ready'. A squad of six Punjabi soldiers fired at him but he had to be finished off with a bullet from the revolver of a British officer.

The effect of this execution on the pro-British English-speaking middle classes was traumatic. They could hardly believe that the British could have done such a thing to one of them. It is now claimed that the decision to 'fight' for national independence was taken by the prominent Sinhalese who had been jailed by Governor Chalmers, as an infuriated reaction to the killing of young Pedris. But they never did fight as Gandhi and Nehru fought, and Jomo Kenyatta fought and Achmed Sukarno fought. Our temperance workers turned freedom fighters did not do much more than make respectful representations to Whitehall. Eventually Attlee's government in its frantic efforts to divest Britain of her commitments in the sub-continent granted independence to Ceylon almost as an afterthought. To think that today, 30 years after independence, Sri Lanka is still ruled by the last survivors of the same compradors of British colonialism who became disaffected with their masters after the killing of Pedris.

On 7th July 1978, the 63rd anniversary of the death of Eddie Pedris, a distinguished gathering was present at Havelock Park (named after a former British Governor) for the unveiling of a statue of the hero by President Jayewardene. After the unveiling, Prime Minister Premadasa garlanded the statue, Minister for Industries Cyril Mathew unveiled the English legend on the plaque and the MP for the area Mr Edmund Samarawickreme unveiled the Sinhala legend. Everybody who was anybody among those present had his part to play in the ceremony. The Prime Minister announced that Havelock Park would henceforth be called Edward Henry Pedris Park. Quite a to-do about an unfortunate young man of a long time ago. We must take our national heroes where we find them.

Colombo

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John Pilger: Final sell-out on the 'Y List' thalidomide victims

Last week, in the august Fish Room at Admiralty House, a press conference was called to announce what Jack Ashley MP described as 'the final chapter of a harrowing struggle for justice'. He was referring to the thalidomide outrage, now in its twenty-first year. At the top table were Alfred Morris, Minister for the Disabled, Gerard Vaughan, the MP and chairman of the thalidomide assessment panel, Jack Ashley and Sir Alan Marre, the former ombudsman. Glasses of Niersteiner were sipped in an atmosphere of effusive self-congratulation as each established man rose to tell of the great good the others had done, of the selfless energy expended, etc. On hand were copies of a letter from the chairman of the Distillers company in which he not only gave his assent to 'the final chapter' but added his own end-of-term congratulations; and for this, he too was congratulated.

The occasion was the publication of a report by Sir Alan Marre on what to do with seventy-four thalidomide 'Y list' youngsters who are still awaiting compensation from Distillers and whose childhood has slipped away, mostly in poverty, without aids or special comforts or, in some cases, even holidays. The parents of these youngsters signed the 1973 settlement and, in so doing, signed away any right to sue Distillers for negligence, although many of them were unaware at the time either of the existence of the 'X' and 'Y' lists, or that only the 342 children on an 'X list' would be compensated. Being on the Y list meant that these families still had to somehow prove to Distillers that the mother had taken thalidomide during the critical period of her pregnancy all those years ago – even though many of the X List youngsters had been accepted into the settlement without tangible proof such as a prescription or a medical record. What those on the 'lucky' X list had in their favour was the approval of one man, Professor Richard Smithells of Leeds University, who 'passed' and 'failed' children, often without seeing them and after viewing only a few family snapshots, and who later protested that he was unaware that Distillers was taking his judgement as gospel. Last week Sir Alan Marre, under no such illusion, completed an historic double: he not only 'failed' the majority of the Y List youngsters and committed some of them to more struggle and more anguish, but he also, almost incredibly, produced another two lists. This time the unlucky list is called 'A Category' and the lucky list is called 'B Category'. Forty-nine youngsters are to be offered a derisory charitable handout of £10,000, twenty are to be included in the 1973 settlement and five are to await further reports. Not surprisingly, Distillers all but sent a sprinter with their congratulations.

Sir Alan's attempt to play God, which he documents in his unimaginative and mean little report, far from being the 'final chapter', is merely the latest chapter in the whole terrible story of the thalidomide families' forced march through a Kafka-like maze created by the medical and legal professions, by politicians and civil servants and, of course, by the Johnnie Walker people who scattered their 'outstandingly safe' drug across Britain and, according to the Sunday Times's long-banned article, kept it on the market after they had been told it was dangerous. Sir Alan's attempt at God-playing is well within tradition; the most notorious precedent was the division of the children, by lawyers, into an X and a Y List. Today, few who have had anything to do with the thalidomide story will deny that this division was arbitrary. Mrs Olwen Jones, a former Thalidomide Trust case worker who has fought longer and more tenaciously than anyone on behalf of the families, put it this way: 'It's the only story: the X List families included a strong body of middle class parents who could get the best legal advice, who knew how to follow the twists and turns and to stay ahead . . . *who knew how to fight!* The Y List families are mostly working-class people, who often find it difficult to deal with a local authority let alone endless legal matters . . . and who feel betrayed and even ashamed.'

Even Dr. Claus Newman, the most visible member of the medical assessment panel, who 'failed' most of the twenty youngsters Sir Alan has now assigned to his lucky B Category, agreed earlier this year that the two lists were arbitrary, that a number of the X List youngsters were not, in his opinion, thalidomide damaged and that 'in ideal circumstances' the onus should have been on Distillers to prove that all those who signed the 1973 settlement were *not* victims of the company's drug. This, of course, is the fundamental moral argument at the root of the whole squalid saga; and yet Sir Alan Marre somehow could not bring himself to see it that way round. By abandoning the only truly fair and compassionate course, which was to recommend that *all* the Y List youngsters be included in the settlement, he kept the burden of proof firmly on the families and on the available medical evidence, which remains scant and divided.

Sir Alan's inquiry was set up as a consequence of a campaign I conducted over four years in the *Daily Mirror*. I know many of the families personally, and when I went to see Sir Alan as a witness, I attempted to describe the daily anguish of the families, their domestic and nervous breakdowns and the shame felt by the youngsters themselves. I also outlined the obvious: that it would cost Distillers peanuts, out of their £130 million-plus profits which have trebled as the families have grown poorer, to top up the Trust Fund, to compensate all the children and to repay the company's moral debt in full. He listened with apparent sympathy, but said that he did not wish to be seen 'punishing' Distillers. In his report Sir Alan wrote, 'My inquiry has satisfied me that, in general, Distillers has tried to apply fairly the test of the balance of probabilities in deciding whether a Y List child should be accepted as thalidomide damaged . . . '

I cannot think of a single family that will regard this statement as less than unbelievable. What 'fairness' was ever applied to Andrew Lowe whose parents fought for sixteen years for justice until their son died last year? Up until a few days before Andrew died, Distillers' lawyers were suggesting this ailing and exhausted boy be examined by yet another 'specialist', to get yet another opinion. 'You'll keep fighting to the end, won't you Mum?' Andrew said to his mother just before his death, which came the day before he was to go on his first holiday: the first the family could afford. This is but one example of Distillers' so-called fairness.

Sir Alan says in his report that his information on the effects of thalidomide is based largely on what Professor Smithells and Dr Newman told him. How many other expert opinions did he seek? Did he take into account the internationally held view, documented in the forthcoming *Sunday Times* book of the thalidomide cover-up, that there are at least as many atypical thalidomide deformities, such as those of many of the Y List children, as typical deformities? There is no mention in Sir Alan's report of the views of Professor David Poswillo, a British scientist who is perhaps the world's leading authority on thalidomide damage, having spent five years studying the effects of the drug. In 1974, during the course of a long interview, Professor Poswillo told me, 'For all sorts of reasons we don't understand, thalidomide produces atypical damage . . . I think the onus should be to prove that thalidomide is not the cause'. I asked Professor Poswillo if he would care to pass judgement on the contested children. 'No thank you!' was his clear reply. No such inhibition has prevented Sir Alan Marre from turning his thumb up and down.

Jelena Svilar is on Sir Alan's unlucky list. I don't know whether her shy, selfless family will go on fighting; I doubt it. Jelena is now a proud young woman trying desperately to conceal her deformities and to get on with life. Seventeen and a half years ago, when she was born in Peterborough, a doctor wrote in his case notes: 'Very interesting case! Thalidomide. *Distaval*'. This doctor confirmed that Jelena's mother had been taking thalidomide during her pregnancy, but no one bothered to mention thalidomide to either parent at the time and years were wasted before they began their hunt for proof. The solicitors acting for the parents sent snapshots of Jelena to Professor Smithells and apologised that they were 'not very good'. Professor Smithells pronounced her not to be a thalidomide child; he did not examine her. And so on. The family remains in this limbo, having now been offered a pittance. What is it about the thalidomide affair that brings out, in so many of those who involve themselves, licensed do-gooders included, a bias against these families and one which prevents them from offering up one final magnanimous gesture after all these years of suffering? Last week's well-orchestrated congratulations over wine in the Fish Room will cover no one's escape from responsibility.

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London Diary

☐ 'It is better that ten guilty persons escape than one innocent suffer'. The golden words of Sir William Blackstone, commonly recognised as the Greatest English Jurist, seem to have been forgotten; they should be made part of an oath of allegiance to the law of any incoming Commissioner of Police. The speeches of police chiefs seem more and more to recommend the inevitable conviction of any person who is put on trial. Now Sir David McNee, brushing aside the hallowed legal principles against self-incrimination, has recommended that the accused should no longer have the right of silence; and if he keeps quiet on legal advice, this fact may be used to prove his guilt. More serious still, Sir David wishes to usurp the power of the jury by suggesting that evidence given in court and not in answers to the police 'might not be believed'.

In fact police interrogation is in urgent need of reform and its present inept and unconvincing ways are costing thousands of unnecessary pounds a year in wasted legal aid fees. 'Verbals', a suspect's answers to police questions, are often written down by officers after the interview is over, when they cannot possibly remember the dialogue as they allege they do, and are never given to the suspect to read over and sign. As a result of the recent trials of corrupt police officers, juries are now extremely reluctant to believe 'verbals' and an enormous amount of time in lengthy Old Bailey trials is spent in challenging them. If all police interviews were put beyond dispute by being tape recorded, and if signed confessions were made only in the presence of a magistrate, the tax payer would be saved a huge burden and the ten guilty persons might even be convicted.

☐ I hope that the Labour Party doesn't do anything so dotty as to make the banning of fox hunting part of its election programme. I have never raised a gun to a bird and I couldn't possibly go hunting without falling off at the first fence; but I have never understood the anger of the middle class, carnivorous, town dwelling prog. against these ancient country pursuits: no one can read, for instance, Turgenev's *Sportsman's Sketches*, Elizabethan poetry or the works of Somerville and Ross without realising that there is nothing inconsistent in the love of hunting and a true understanding of animals and the countryside. I also remember Lord Paget, a Labour Peer, recommending a broken neck on the hunting field at the age of eighty as a much better death than slowly fading away in a geriatric ward in Weston-Super-Mare.

Even if this is quite wrong, the opponents of fox hunting should be wiser than to try and make it illegal. Nothing is more foolish than to pass laws turning an activity supported by a sizeable number of otherwise law-abiding people into a crime; and the popularity of pornography and pot may be largely due to the laws against them. Think also of the opportunities open to the more unreliable members of Sir David McNee's force. Imagine being dragged off to Bow Street after a pink coat and riding boots had been *planted* in your wardrobe.

☐ I am, of course, fascinated by all theological disputes, but I cannot for the life of me discover the basis for the argument against lady priests. 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus', says *Galatians* 3, verse 28. But then, of course, the authority of the Bible has never had much influence on the workings of the Church. Vestal virgins, the Delphic Oracle and Iphigenia provide excellent precedents: and it's true that priests have always been treated as a third sex, closer to women than to men (for instance they have been exempt from military service and having to pay taxes, which were also women's privileges). Surely the Churches realise that women take their work far more seriously, and perform it far more industriously than men; and I look forward eagerly to the days when the Buckinghamshire lanes are filled with ladies in dog collars busily bicycling round about their parish duties.

The only basis I can see for hesitation is the fear of menstruation deeply implanted in many religions. I know, for instance, that if a devout Mohammedan stands in his back garden in Kilburn and says, 'Talek, Talek, Talek' three times he will successfully divorce his wife in Pakistan; unless she is having a period and therefore unclean from a religious point of view. Can it be that some of the ecclesiastics assembled at Lambeth still have a deep seated terror of an Archbishop of Canterbury who may not be feeling quite up to snuff on the Third Sunday in Lent?

☐ Sitting writing a further series of telly plays about an Old Bailey hack, I am constantly distressed at the number of ludicrous legal incidents which I cannot include because no one would believe them. I know it to be true that recently a Circuit Judge, trying a robber in whose possession a cosh and handcuffs had been found, thought that the jury might be interested to know how the handcuffs could be used to incapacitate a victim. Brushing aside the protests of the prosecutor he clipped one handcuff to his left wrist. 'And now,' he said, 'If I take the other handcuff . . . Oh, do be quiet Mr Smith!' (this to the prosecuting Counsel, who was vainly trying to interrupt again) 'I am going to show the jury how these things work!' It was not until the mechanism snapped that Mr Smith was able to inform His Honour that the police had quite failed to recover the key, and the fettered Judge was led away to await the attentions of the local ironmonger. Put that in a *Rumpole* and ten critics would accuse you of writing a fifth rate Ealing comedy. All the best jokes, and the wildest coincidences occur in reality, and fiction is becoming as logical and dull as 'life' was once thought to be.

☐ I cannot find much cause for excitement in the White Paper's plans for broadcasting which have been solemnly debated over the past weeks. There are only a limited number of good programmes anyway, and it doesn't seem to me to matter much which organisation does them, or where the rest of the rubbish is shared around; but I do deplore the setting up of another Commission composed of persons 'appointed by the Home Office' to listen to complaints about 'taste and standards'; although I am not surprised that the BBC appears to spinelessly accept this. Only people who are determined to be shocked, and find time hanging heavy on their hands, will bother to complain anyway, and the BBC are already far too subservient to the views of professional Puritans. Although I am deeply embarrassed and often offended by *Mr and Mrs* and *The Sale of the Century*, search as I will, I have never been able to find all those lustful and violent programmes which Mrs Whitehouse seeks to advertise. The only reasonable complaint seems to me to be that of the girl who said she was against sex on television; it is extremely uncomfortable and you keep sliding off.

☐ As in the Buxton Club before a new casting director comes to town, the Temple is a twitter with who will be briefed in the proceedings arising out of the Norman Scott affair. I can only contemplate with amazement the prospect of being governed by Mrs Thatcher simply because an ex-leader of the Liberal Party once formed a friendship with a male model. If such are the great moments that shape our ends then Henry Ford was right in his view of history: and the Guiding Spirit of the Universe must be possessed of a particularly malicious sense of humour.

John Mortimer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Yesterday morning as Aquamart tried to set sail, there were several comical hitches. Mr David Price, Chief Purser said: 'It's like dealing with lunatics; it's easier to clear the QE2. Anyway how could you do business with people who eat frogs?' – *Daily Telegraph* (G. M. Moger)

☐ A number of local authorities have refused an offer from the Government and the EEC of free milk for junior school pupils. They include the London borough of Barnet, which contains Mrs Thatcher's constituency of Finchley. 'Milk might be injurious to their health' was one councillor's comment. – *Guardian* (Paul Gadsby)

☐ A member of the Royal Family is not paid – not even expenses – unless you call the Civil List payment. – Letter in *People's Journal* (Mary Simpson)

☐ The Hon Gerald Forbes-Tweedie wishes to apologise to Mrs Ashbrooke-Pembleton-Ffrench for the damage done to the cucumbers from champagne corks going through the greenhouse roof at her daughter, Nancy's wedding. – *The Times* (R. Simmonds)

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Food for Thought

Could anything in the world be better, and I speak gastronomically rather than ethically, than a nicely grilled kipper? It shares with bacon and egg the distinction of being a dish to be welcomed with equal pleasure at almost any hour of the day or night. For those who start work betimes, munch a scrappy sandwich lunch and are therefore driven by hunger pains to partake of a 'high tea' at about 6 pm, a sizzling kipper must always be its high spot.

I have to confess to being a little vague as to what a kipper would look like were one to meet it while out bathing and I share the perplexities of the author of the merry music-hall number, 'Does a kipper swim flat or folded?' Could one, I wonder, breed them locally in a roomy, plastic, water-filled washing-up bowl liberally laced with plankton, seaweed and Cerebos? Would the union of two mating kippers, head-over-heels in love with each other, ever be blessed in these unusual surroundings and, if so, with what should I feed their little ones? Would their parents, weary of plankton, eat them? Life bristles with problems.

In Devon, our nearest kippers (and by 'nearest' I am speaking in the sense of 'being available in shops' rather than geographically, for in the latter case Torbay is relatively close at hand and shoals of them must, like holidaymakers, be currently enjoying the delights of Torquay *et ses environs*, not to speak of Paignton *en fête*) are to be found in a deep frozen condition in that prince of stores, the Exeter branch of the superb Marks & Spencer. They (the kippers) are of enormous size and succulence. They must, I suppose, be English and yet they have an exotic, foreign look and the somewhat bloated appearance of, say, an Italian opera star who has given up trying and has happily gone to seed. Do Italians encourage kippers? I rather doubt it. Can they be Portuguese; our oldest ally being, after all, so skilful with sardines?

How fortunate we are in this country to have access to such simple foods. No government, however hard they may try to make quite everything in our modern life beastly, can do anything to foul up new potatoes or fresh peas or the first of the broad beans. Not even Mr Healey can cast a blight on roast lamb and mint sauce. I have recently had staying with me two highly agreeable American ladies, good trencherwomen both of them and of pleasantly solid build (they have figured before in these pages, the ones who, losing their railway tickets, kept saying to the Exeter stationmaster 'We're from the other side, you know', which he heard as Other Side and, much startled, thought they were ghosts). At breakfast time and to accompany the previously mentioned bacon and eggs, I cooked that plainest of joys, squares of fried bread. My guests were extremely amazed at this quite unknown sight. They peered, and gingerly prodded and eventually ventured deliciously forth on this simple treat. From then on, we had it daily. They spoke disparagingly, as well they might, of their own American bread. It seems to me to have a crumbly consistency, so uncharacteristic of that excellent nation, that would not stand up to treatment in a good British frying-pan. Later in the day we had fresh raspberries, for which I supplied cream. How, I asked, was their own cream? It appeared, in the districts in which they both lived, not to exist. This was certainly the case in the Wisconsin area where I once spent an enjoyable summer month. No cream. No fried bread. So much for the sophisticated western Shangri-la of so many people's imaginings.

If my mind seems to be running rather greedily on food, it is because I have just, as a result of the slightest of malaises, spent a day in bed on a reduced diet (a rusk here, a cup of Bovril there) and returning health has sharpened up my culinary thoughts no end. I have also, to my huge profit and pleasure, been consuming a book of tremendous interest and which explains, in an adult manner but yet one which a child of 12 could understand, just what happens to that grilled kipper while (and after) I am eating it. The book is called *Living With a Stranger*, the stranger being one's own body, and the author, John Stewart Collis, also provides literary digressions of the most entertaining kind (Macdonald and Jane's sell it at £6.50 and it is worth double that sum). Our author patiently explains most of the body's oddities and the strangeness of its appetites. I recall a pregnant woman in a novel who could 'fancy' nothing but prune juice. Mr Collis makes mention of a shark, caught off Jamaica and perhaps pregnant too, who became fixated on household goods and gobbled up a camera, a bunch of keys, an unoccupied pair of trousers and a chest-of-drawers.

But to my kipper. I have now conveyed it in sections to my mouth and have attacked it with my teeth which, Mr Collis warns, 'may seem as hard as marble but are as frail as flowers'. With the aid of 'that slippery mobile platform', the tongue, I have swallowed the liquefied morsels. What now? I had previously assumed that food descended to the stomach, and down and out, by means of gravitation. Not at all. Meals can be taken, and what cheerful tidings this must be for yogis, equally well while standing on the head, powerful muscular actions in the throat conveying the material to a region beyond one's control, the stomach. How totally astonishing to find that we could 'at a pinch, manage without a stomach', though it is useful as a larder and a staging post for food that has been bolted and requires further breaking-down.

A series of messages will already have reached the stomach from the organs of taste and smell and 'if their report is favourable', the substance on which the mouth has been working 'will justify an outflow of gastric juice'. But if, with the mind elsewhere, mastication is skimped and little joy manifested, 'the stomach affords the viands an indifferent reception' and hence hiccoughs, rumbles, ulcers and excessive wind. Nobody but Mr Collis would think to tell us that 'inflammatory gases as eructations have caused explosions at surgical operations', a cow's fart recently ignited a farm building in Shropshire, and gases proceeding from the ulcerous stomach of a parson made his breath catch fire each time he blew out the altar candles.

Everywhere there is fascination. People who faint at the sight of their own blood are doing the sensible thing (it allows it time to clot). A large elephant will provide 60 lbs of dung 15 times a day – 900 lbs. So basically liquid is the human body that it is 'really a bag of water with things in it'. And we have hardly gone 30 pages before our author has provided entirely apposite references to Huxley, Jane Carlyle, Julius Caesar, Marie Antoinette, Hardy, Ruskin, Nelson, Aristotle and Lady Macbeth (astounded, like so many, to discover that the average human body – Duncan's, for example – contains about ten or so pints of blood). By now you will, I trust, have seen the point of Mr Collis. On no account miss him.

Roger Woddis

To Be a Suspect

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir David McNee wants the police to have greater powers.

He who thinks eulogy
  Is right and proper,
Let him applaud McNee,
  The copper's copper.
If wholly innocent
Or only slightly bent,
He should be quite content
  To be a suspect.

Who labours to annoy
  By keeping quiet
Will very soon enjoy
  A prison diet.
Who shouts until he's hoarse
When he is searched by force
Will be presumed, of course,
  To be a villain.

The lover of fair play
  Will not be shaken
If, in a kindly way,
  His dabs are taken.
To combat the misdeeds
Unbridled freedom breeds
The Hammer only needs
  To add a Sickle.

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Letters to the Editor

Tilting at windmills

Sir, I have to take issue with your leader (NS 21 July), in which you argue that the 35 hour week is unlikely to reduce unemployment significantly, and that it is simply a policy adopted by trade union leaders to disguise acquiescence in an incomes policy, and lack of pressure for other Government measures to reduce unemployment. You also imply that the hours reduced will be taken up by additional overtime and that the objective would be better achieved by cutting overtime working itself.

In the first place, the campaign for a 35 hour week is only part of an overall TUC case to tackle unemployment which includes additional public expenditure and job creation, international co-ordination for growth, and increased industrial training. But all these measures will still leave the UK – and other Western countries – with an unemployment problem. Hence some degree of 'work-sharing' is necessary unless we are to accept mass unemployment for the next few decades.

Secondly, in relation to wages policy, the TUC have quite clearly rejected the necessity for norms and ceilings. But we were realistically expecting the Government to go down that road. What we were hoping was to persuade them to allow, in addition, some reduction in hours, through both a reduced basic week and buying-out of overtime. In the event, we were less than successful in our arguments with Government and the degree of encouragement to work-sharing given by the White Paper is disappointingly restrictive. Nevertheless, we shall continue to give priority to hours reductions.

On the question of overtime, there are two separate points. It is quite clearly the intention of all negotiators aiming at a 35 hour week to link that with reduction on any compensatory overtime working. While, in a period of relatively high economic activity in 1964-66, the immediate effect was an increase in overtime, within two years this had disappeared. Both the economic environment and exceptional clauses in hours-reducing agreements will mean very little compensatory overtime this time round. At the same time, we are conducting a campaign to reduce overtime working generally. This is a more complicated process than is often assumed by those with little knowledge of industry. And it is complicated by the fact that many workers rely on overtime for a decent wage and many employers see overtime as a cheap, controllable and expendable source of additional labour. Nevertheless, we will campaign to reduce overtime wherever practicable.

On the question of cost. The *maximum* cost is 6-7 per cent for an immediate reduction to 35 hours. That will, undoubtedly, be offset by man-hour productivity gains, and by phasing of any reduction. So the cost would be substantially less than that. There will undoubtedly be a cost – but that cost has to be seen against the crippling cost of mass unemployment if we fail to take action on work-sharing. If reductions in hours were totally self-financing, as the Treasury appear to want and the original TUC paper appeared to encourage, then (except in the case of intensified shift-working) they would also not be employment-creating – that was the kernel of the discussion on the General Council. And it indicated not, as you imply, a failure or refusal of the TUC leaders to understand the arguments, but a very real understanding of the economics. As to international repercussions, you should yourselves indicate that the British manual worker already works more hours per year than the 'hard-working Germans' and that it was the TUC who first raised this at international level with the EEC – to which there has been no response by Governments or employers, but which Continental unions are pursuing, with some limited success in Belgium and in Germany.

It is not, therefore, true that the campaign for a 35 hour week is in default of any other policy. It is the trade unions' own contribution to a package of policies to tackle the problems of mass unemployment which confront us. It would help if journals such as your own took it seriously, rather than dismissing it so tritely.

DAVID BASNETT
General Secretary
General & Municipal Workers Union
Thorne House
Claygate, Surrey

Labour and the Lords

Sir, As one who has twice tried, unsuccessfully, to introduce a bill to exclude hereditary voting rights from the House of Lords may I suggest why I believe that your understandable exasperation at the present situation (NS 4 August) is leading you into making a dangerous mistake. You seem to forget that once an elected body were to take the place of the Lords it would inevitably come to dispute the primacy of the Commons. And if you think that might not be a bad thing just remember what an elected senate did for the wretched Gough Whitlam in Australia and how the existence of two elected Houses of Congress has so often prevented radical change in America.

There is only one sensible way of providing a modern Second Chamber and that is by setting up a nominated life member senate, on the lines of the Canadian Senate. As a nominated body it would present no threat to the Commons (especially if it were denied at least some of the powers still possessed by the Lords, for example over private members' bills). Meanwhile what is it that inhibits Labour Prime Ministers from creating enough Labour peers to provide a Labour majority in the present House of Lords? This should be Jim Callaghan's first act when he wins the next general election. It would save a lot of trouble later on, especially when he does come to fulfil his promise to abolish the Lords.

JOHN LEE
House of Commons

Bitterness over Biafra

Sir, Sir David Hunt (Letters 21 July) tells us that 'things were nothing like as bad as people believed at the time.' I wonder. For nearly three weeks in the August of 1969 I visited what was then left of Biafra. Never again do I want to see, as I saw then daily in village after village and hospital after hospital, the evidence of the starving. Huts full of dying babies are not easily forgotten. The blockade, made possible by the generous supply of British weapons, resulted in civilian starvation on such a scale.

I well remember being told, during a lunch later that year at the Nigerian High Commission in London organised by the much more effective and discreet public relations firm which worked for the Federal Government, that the blame for the food blockade should be attributed to Biafran obstinacy. I took the opportunity to suggest that to show their goodwill Federal bombers, instead of trying to find Uli by night, might rather drop food by day to villages and hospitals. There was a strained silence. Bitterness is not an intelligent reaction and certainly no basis for a reconciled future. But a solid appreciation of what great powers and their servants will do to secure what is seen as national interest, in this case oil and investment, is a lesson every war has apparently to teach us again.

MGR BRUCE KENT
St Aloysius Church
20 Phoenix Road, London NW1

The Polisario's war

Sir, Christopher Price's piece (NS 4 August) informative as it was, may mislead readers on one or two important points. He mentions one 'compelling argument' which supports the Polisario's claims: the principle of the inviolability of colonial frontiers in Africa. But there is a second and more universal principle which he does not mention: that of self-determination. Both the UN and the International Court of Justice have upheld the right of the people of Western Sahara to national independence. King Hassan's 'Green March' was not intended to 'take over the Sahara', nor did it do so. The whole exercise was a smokescreen to conceal what was simultaneously going on further inland – the real takeover of the territory by the Moroccan army.

Finally, it is by no means clear that those who remained in Western Sahara now accept Moroccan rule. Amnesty International's briefing paper on Morocco suggests otherwise. So does the report published by the International Federation for the Rights of Man, which speaks of widespread arrests, torture, killing and curfews. The full story of Moroccan repression of the Saharan population remains to be told.

ROGER HARDY
Co-ordinator
Sahara Action Committee
9 Poland Street, London W1

Fobbed off

Sir, We thought your readers might be interested in the following letter that we have sent to the Home Secretary:

'We the constituents of Mr Kilroy-Silk MP (Ormskirk) are very concerned about the difficulty in obtaining information about our rights. Bearing this in mind, we cannot understand your reply to our MP when he questioned you in Parliament about the Official Secrets Act (*Hansard* 19 July), in which you say, 'I can only express the wish that at the election he finds more than two or three people in his constituency who are concerned about it'. Let us assure you that Robert Kilroy-Silk was speaking on behalf of more than two or three people who are interested in more open government and we find the way you fobbed him off with your answer shameful. We hope that this letter will go some way towards curing you of your delusions about the Ormskirk constituents because we do worry and we do care about the matter.'

W. TRAYNOR
and eight others
21 Quernmore Road
Northwood
Kirkby, Merseyside

Dylanology

Sir, When Bob Dylan sings 'Forever Young' he refers to his spirit, not his body. For Mr Disch (NS 28 July) to regret the absence of an accompanying irony is imperceptive in the extreme.

A. G. C. MORRISON
72 Westow Street
London SE19

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Harold Beaver

Tilting at Windbags

William Empson and the Philosophy of Literary Criticism by CHRISTOPHER NORRIS *Athlone Press* £8.95

With *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) William Empson established himself, while still in his early twenties, as a virtuoso reader. Cantankerous and infinitely wily, that work alone was enough to assure him a coveted place in the long line of British poet-critics. But the final verdict, like that on his predecessor – another Cambridge scholar, A. E. Housman – must remain: 'William Empson: a problem'. It is a problem that Christopher Norris set himself to tackle in this first full-length study. 'Why should the brilliant, ground-breaking critic of Ambiguity and Pastoral,' he asks,

> now be so occupied with scholarly quarrels, attempting (for instance) to re-establish, against heavy textual odds, the earlier, more libertine versions of Donne's love poems? Why expend such labour, against the weight of received opinion, to justify his editorial ommission of the pious marginal glosses to *The Ancient Mariner*?

To which Empson, in a postscript, bluntly and somewhat unfairly replies: 'anything I had printed for the last quarter of a century was irrelevant nonsense, to be dismissed briefly with a sigh.'

The problem is compounded by the triple wave of acclaim that has carried *Seven Types* through the 1950s to the contemporary reader. Hailed as critical guide for its own era of the Metaphysical revival, it became officially (if grudgingly) recognised as a pioneer of the American New Criticism, to be taken over yet again in our own day by the French Structuralists. Meanwhile Empson himself, on his return from China in 1953, was determinedly heading in a seemingly opposite direction. By his own account this was 'the peak of the neo-Christian movement' (of C. S. Lewis and T. S. Eliot) whose subsidence left what he calls 'the bleakness of aestheticism all the more apparent, especially from its assurance that no one has feelings or judgments different from those of a literary don'. Thus, to this day, speaks the perennially irreverent outsider. Oddly leaning on Max Beerbohm (of all bleak aesthetes), he castigates 'the sound of contented munching from a field of academic critics, and the perpetual swish-swish of their white-wash brushes'. As the opening page of *Milton's God* (1961) announced: 'the subject cannot be viewed in a purely aesthetic manner, as Milton himself would be the first to claim.'

For what could be more purely aesthetic than the New Criticism with its self-contained formalism, or even newer Structuralism with its multiple readings of permanently open texts? The aim now was no longer 'truth' but a kind of emptiness or vacuum: to recuperate a text into any one formal system of meaning was to become absorbed in stasis. Each reader must be at liberty (so Robbe-Grillet would claim) to construct his own module, with variants, out of the literary Meccano set, not just to reproduce the authorised design on the cover. Plural interpretation of both lyric and narrative, then, is more than an excursion into potentiality; it has become obligatory. For a sophisticated reading is precisely one that extricates itself from unconscious complicity with arbitrary authority. As Empson once seemed to guarantee:

> I have continually employed a method of analysis which jumps the gap between two ways of thinking; which produces a possible set of alternative meanings with some ingenuity, and then says it is grasped in the preconsciousness of the reader by a native effort of the mind.

Quantum physics and the Indeterminacy Principle had left their mark on *Seven Types*. From the ambiguity of practical criticism Empson moved on to the ambiguities of pastoral irony and the *discordia concors* of *The Structure of Complex Words* (1951). The same contradictions and conflict lay at the heart of his own poetry. For this 'juggling with contradictory impulses', he could maintain, was itself the mark of a democratic attitude. This juncture of 'incompatibles' was not part of a unique poetic order but common to universal psychology:

> Indeed the way in which a person lives by these vaguely-conceived opposites is the most important thing about his make-up; the way in which opposites can be stated so as to satisfy a wide variety of people, for a great number of degrees of interpretation, is the most important thing about the communication of the arts.

'This daring semantic frontiersman' I. A. Richards (his supervisor at Magdalene) was to call him, so frank 'about how little we yet know about our meanings and about the inherent difficulties of turning our language on to itself, trying to say how we say, to understand how we understand.' Yet Empson persistently steered clear of the structuralist tradition. He was not taken by the vogue for language games any more than he was touched by New Critical contempt for what was once called the 'Intentional Fallacy'. To the contrary, he loudly proclaimed his heresy in *Milton's God*:

> We could not use language as we do, and above all we could not learn it when babies, unless we were always floating in a general willingness to make sense of it; all the more, then, to try to make a printed page mean something good is only fair. There is a question for a critic at what point this generous and agreeable effort of mind ought to stop, and with an old text (the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare for example) it is no use to impute a meaning which the intended readers or audience could not have had in mind, either consciously or unconsciously. At bottom, you are trying to imagine the mind of the author at the moment of composition, but this may be too hard taken alone, so you need to remember that he was intensely concerned at that moment with whether the words he had found 'expressed' what he was trying to say, that is, whether they would have the effect he wanted upon the audience he was imagining.

Moved in part by Husserl's argument for the 'intentionality of experience', Empson jettisoned the sacrosanct independence of the text. As he was to insist in the pages of this journal, in a review of Christopher Ricks's *Milton's Grand Style* (23 August 1963), verbal analysis alone was not enough.

The decisive shift from a semantic to a moral emphasis had been signalled by *Complex Words*. As Geoffrey Hartman argued in *Beyond Formalism* (1970): 'Only Empson managed to escape the "shibboleth of form" by postulating types of ambiguity which showed how precarious the unity of form was, or how rebellious language was.' The centre of the debate now was: what kind of morality? Not Christianity, of course, which he considered as monstrous as excrescences of the Aztec or Benin imagination, but some form of humanism or rationalist philosophy. His appeal was to public debate as opposed to the High Church orthodoxies of discontinuity, symbolism and formalism, whose classic exponent was T. S. Eliot with his anti-rationalist *Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*. Empson's endeavour, rather, was to bridge poetry and normal language or commonsense discourse. He became equally opposed to I. A. Richards's behaviourist model. For he has more in common with J. L. Austin – and, more recently, Stanley Cavell – in believing that the 'emotive', too, involves structures of assertion, which implies a basic sanity about everyday usage.

So to this day he plays Sancho Panza tilting at the quixotic windbags of Eng. Lit. From I. A. Richards's *Practical Criticism*, his starting-point, he has returned to the rigours of an historical approach, 'even though' (in his closing words) 'it feels less momentous than propounding a theory of Ambiguity'. For meaning is also a function of human experience. If Empson's earlier achievement was to make us read writers, from the late Tudor to the Victorian period, *'as if* they were our contemporaries' (in George Fraser's words), then his later achievement has been to remind us precisely how and why they are not. So scrutiny of Marvell's texts must be balanced by visits to the Public Records Office. One has to *believe* Rochester and grasp the implications of his desperate ethic, if the poems are to seem serious at all. Questions of 'style' are inseparable from questions of intention and fact. That is why *Complex Words*, Norris argues, homed in on the Restoration and Augustan periods: 'These authors call for *interpretation*, rather than mere explication; their complexity is a matter of social nuance, of tactful understatement and ironic self-regard.'

But 'intentionality' remains, arguably, Empson's weakest link, his Achilles heel. He is at heart a generous critic, on the look-out for 'decent feelings', temperamentally averse to ironic or aesthetic closures, persuaded that an author's intention (be he Milton or Joyce)

Among this week's contributors:

NELSON POLSBY is Professor of Political Science at the University of California, and the author of *Political Promises*.

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'is inherently likely to be the best possible, the richest or most humanly responsive, construction we can place upon his work'. So interpretation in *Milton's God*, as Stanley Fish remarked, 'developed in the spaces *between* the explorations of verbal texture rather than as a result of them'. Or, as Graham Hough argued (in an essay not quoted here), Empson left the question of intention largely in abeyance: 'He had to leave a space round it, for it was in this ambiguous space that most of his work was to be done.' Neither 'the words on the page' nor 'the intention of the author' could alone reveal the significance of a work of literature.

That 'ambiguous space' is none other than what used to be called the 'story line'. Empson's great strength, whether in reading *King Lear* or Milton or Virginia Woolf, is his attention to story-telling. Yeats's 'Byzantium', for example, he suggested would make better sense if one disregarded the symbolism and treated it instead as a kind of science fiction narrative. For it is the narrative thread he is after, the ordered process of invention, in which activity, demanding an exploratory attention, may be more important than results. 'It may be that the human mind,' he wrote towards the end of *Complex Words*, 'can recognise actually incommensurable values, and that the chief human value is to stand up between them.' If so, it is the human lot, in life as in literature, to accept the contraditions and live within them.

His own favourite book apparently was *The Faces of Buddha*, written in the Far East and lost in the post en route to his publishers. For Buddhism *is* the way of reconciliation; and ultimately there is something of a notional Buddhism lurking in Empson's strenuously rational humanism. An unsympathetic reader, Hugh Kenner, however, linked him to his own image of *Alice*'s White Knight, patiently labouring at his 'absurd' though fruitful conceptions. 'Empson for his part' (Norris sagely comments) 'would not, I think, disdain the comparison.' For his is a close attention to poetic logic, a rationalism that is always pragmatic rather than methodological. His sturdy bluffness indeed has evoked comparison with Dr Johnson's quirky eccentricities. He himself might favour Fielding for his moral generosity, his capacity to see all sides of a question and his honest self-appraisal. Had he not praised Fielding as a man 'fit to sit on a magistrate's bench, prepared, in literature as in life, to know and judge any situation'?

Christopher Norris's dense but lucid (if somewhat repetitive) study shows a very exact awareness of the 20th-century Anglo-American tradition in which Empson has played his creative and maverick role. That role is by no means played out. From the first he set the cat among the pigeons. His ability, to this day, of arousing a puzzled and antagonistic response suggests that his treatment of poems as concentrated species of ordinary language, and of dramas or novels as complex solutions to typical social conflicts and adjustments – like J. L. Austin's inquiries – will not simply vanish. To the contrary, they are the very stuff for a new generation of critical debate. His are the questions which the present heady love-affair with French structuralism has temporarily laid aside. Christopher Norris, though not seeking to resolve the problem in structuralist terms, has helped the way to that future, inevitable confrontation.

Nelson W. Polsby

The Plebiscitary President

Watergate and the Constitution by PHILIP B. KURLAND *University of Chicago Press* £8.75

There is a tenuous relationship in the United States between constitutional crisis and constitutional change. Watergate caused a constitutional crisis. Centrally at issue was whether it was practically possible to use the seemingly moribund impeachment provisions of the constitution to get rid of a President who on many and varied grounds had become both politically and constitutionally intollerable. That the answer to this question turned out to be affirmative became the occasion of a great display of intense emotion – incredulity, consternation, amazement, exhilaration – but not of much constitutional change. Americans took the rusty blunderbuss of the impeachment process off the wall, cleaned it, oiled it, loaded it, aimed it, cocked it, and put it back on the wall again. President Nixon's successors have gone on with the job, very much like his predecessors. As before, the Presidency is an office filled with political opportunities and political frustrations. Watergate changed the Presidency only indirectly, by giving impetus to reforms of nomination procedures irrelevant to the main transgressions of the Nixon Presidency. In short, more evidence – perhaps more than we need – that the God who allegedly watches over small children, drunks, and the United States of America has a sense of humour.

Incidental to the main constitutional crisis, in the course of Watergate-related events a swarm of legal-constitutional issues was raised. What are the entitlements – and the limits to the rights – of Congress to conduct investigations into the executive branch? Of the President to deny Congress information under a theory of 'executive privilege'? Of the courts to arbitrate in cases of conflict between the other two branches? Of the President to appoint and remove a Special Prosecutor? Of a President to stand immune from criminal prosecution? Of a President to issue a pardon in the absence of a conviction or even of an indictment for crimes? To all of these questions Philip Kurland brings the very considerable weight of his learning and the coherent outlook of an observer of the constitution who likes his judicial opinions firmly planted – if possible with both feet – in doctrine that is respectful of the plain words of the constitution (when there are plain words that apply), and of the structural design set out by founders of the republic.

Modest as these requirements at first glance appear to be, they are not infrequently disappointed. The heart of Kurland's argument in this book is that Watergate is best understood as an outcome of the aggrandisement of the Presidency, a result of historical processes in which the separation of powers, and the checks and balances built into the original constitutional design, have been eroded. The Supreme Court, moreover, by facilitating the decline of federalism, of Congressional power, and of checks on the Presidency, must in Kurland's view accept a share of the blame for creating circumstances in which a series of events like Watergate can be considered a not illogical outcome.

Thus the book can be read as a contribution to the continuing debate in the United States over whether Watergate should ultimately be blamed more on the Presidency of Richard Nixon or on the system that produced it. Kurland, as I have indicated, considers that merely dispensing with the services of Mr Nixon was not enough, but that further steps to curb the imperial Presidency – at the very least by increasing the accountability of Presidential staff – and to strengthen Congress would be desirable. Kurland accepts the view that Nixon attempted to conduct a plebiscitary Presidency, whose legitimacy was grounded solely upon election results, and, as other commentators have done, he calls for a return to the traditional check-and-balance model of national government as the proper remedy.

For British readers who incline to minimise the extent to which President Nixon was a full-blown constitutional embarrassment rather than merely a political nuisance, *Watergate and the Constitution* will be particularly useful. Kurland, like many of the ablest American constitutional lawyers of his generation, considers the issue of political stability as highly problematic, and does not readily welcome tinkering with the foundations of a political order capable of spontaneous, incremental, evolutionary reform. He believes that had not Nixon resigned, he would have been impeached and convicted, 'and', Kurland says, 'it is not clear that the nation could have survived it'. For someone who believes this to support Nixon's removal, as Kurland does, ought to suggest to foreign observers that recent attempts to become nostalgic about the Nixon Presidency are missing the point. And the point is that while Nixon may not have invented Presidential misbehaviour he carried things to unprecedented extremes:

> What he did do was to utilise devices created by his predecessors, who used them sparingly, while he used them persistently; who used them in isolation, while he used them in combination; who used them unsuccessfully, while he used them successfully, until they failed him in the end . . . He created a presidential, political police force; he rejected the basic concept of Anglo-American political freedom, the rule of law.

For people who keep track of such things, there should be very little confusion about what it takes for a President seriously to court impeachment. It helps, of course, if he commits impeachable offences, acts which are not merely criminal in an ordinary sense but which in addition tend to grab or hoard power properly lodged elsewhere. In addition, a second threshold must be crossed. To be impeached a President must also convince Congress that it is politically impossible to forgive his impeachable offences, that to do so would be dangerous. Impeachment in the US constitution is by design a thoroughly political process. It is given to elected officials to invoke, and the penalties for conviction are

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explicitly restricted to loss of office and proscription from further office. Additional criminal proceedings are not ruled out, but these must be instituted separately. So to argue, as some do, that Mr Nixon's brush with impeachment was unjust because it can be found in the record that his predecessors committed or tolerated acts such as formed a part of the bill of particulars against him is to ignore the politics of the matter. What Mr Nixon received at the hands of Congress – Republicans as well as Democrats – and the courts he earned; the pardon he got from his successor he did not.

This English

A fine spread of error this week from Fred Emery: the only competition for the star prize comes from Craig Brown, with two consecutive misnumberings. A couple of hideous metaphors, and a cloth-ear.

☐ Not one of the Conservative MPs and the Shadow Cabinet members, including strong supporters of Mrs Thatcher, who I have met privately since Tuesday, have suggested anything other than that it was a sorely missed opportunity. **Fred Emery** *The Times* (C. H. Rolph)

☐ The prospects of speaking to Mr James is a little more frightening than the event itself. His television and literary criticism mangles those who fail to speak good English. **Craig Brown** *Ritz Magazine* (Erica Circuit)

☐ James Callaghan . . . then used all the arm-twisting techniques at which he is a master, to emasculate the campaign. **Paul Johnson** *Sunday Telegraph* (D. W. A. Rosser)

☐ Second, it is lazy, rejecting the agony of artistic creation in favour of the cushioned ease of pleasing the general by adulterating the caviar. **Bernard Levin** *Sunday Times* (James Fenton)

☐ Plans for extending pedestrian rule are afoot. *Daily Telegraph* (Simon Barrets)

John Sturrock

Look, Ma

The Champions by PETER FULLER *Allen Lane* £6.50

Psychoanalysts have had oddly little to say about sport and about the unholy subliminal meanings it may hold for us. Such neglect is suspect: can it be that they resent sport, as a rival therapy to their own, that we are as likely to purge our complexes in the sweat and puff of the playing-fields as we are to talk ourselves out of them in the fug of the consulting-room? Might jogging succeed where Jung has failed? Art and artists have long been grist to the Freudian mill, so why not athletes? We know what exotic interpretations Freud put on Dostoevsky and Leonardo, not what he might have unearthed by way of primitive emotions within Gentleman Jim Corbett or W. G. Grace.

It was left to Melanie Klein to hit on a psychoanalytical theory of sport, and to Peter Fuller to bring it into wider circulation. One of her patients was Little Felix, small, disturbed and mad on football – whose prize for being treated in so eminent a quarter was, if not recovery from his symptoms, then at least a place in the analytical literature, alongside Little Fritz, Little Hans and other diminutive oddballs from the Viennese kindergarten. Associating freely in the Kleinian sanctum, Little Felix revealed all. His passion for soccer was not what it seemed:

> Klein concluded that the game symbolised the stroking of the mother's breasts for him and also functioned as displacement of other infantile sexual impulses towards her. Felix had replaced his repressed desire for coitus with the mother with football.

(A Freudian misfingering of the keyboard there had me guiltily typing 'quoits' for 'coitus'.) Never one to shirk a generalisation, Klein expanded this singular insight into the claim that all athletic activity symbolises the longed-for but forbidden penetration of the mother, and that the fields, courts, pitches and tracks on which athletes perform their action-replays of frustrated incest are so many stand-ins for the maternal body.

Football as symbolic breast-stroking: a fresh and intimate way of looking at the game, and possibly borne out by the fact that whenever footballers break the rules and *actually* handle the ball they are penalised by a shrill blast from the Superego's whistle. Fuller builds on this hypothesis, together with sundry other articles of Freudian doctrine, to psychoanalyse a number of champion sportsmen. They, we find, are merely playing out, very profitably and in public, the oedipal script which Freud maintains was written for us all in our cradles. They desire the mother and fear the father. Their common aim is to achieve in reality the fantastic 'omnipotence' they craved as tinies, when their wish to supplant their father was impeded by the presence of the supplanted one himself. They want to be acknowledged, proven best, having overcome all competitors. What they fear – or, this being the theatre of true ambivalence, what they both fear and secretly desire – is failure. Failure symbolises our old friend castration, or the vengeance of the father, incurred by those ambitious enough to cross him.

The champions Fuller calls on to make his case are Bobby Fischer, the bullfighter El Cordobés, Muhammad Ali, Malcolm and Donald Campbell, the racing-drivers, and the great Victorian jockey Fred Archer. All of them fit the procrustean analyst's couch to perfection. A more woefully hung-up bunch you never saw: the manically exacting, insolent Fischer, perpetuating a depressing tradition of immaturity among the geniuses of chess; the flashily aggressive El Cordobés, the yobbo of the bullring, sacrificing the art of the *faena* to well-paid sensationalism; Ali, the one likeable figure in the book but, if Fuller is right, an impossible compound of braggartism and funk; the puerile, incomparably egocentric Campbells, father and son; and the unhappy Archer, first starving himself viciously to keep his weight down and finally committing suicide in front of his sister. All of them seem to have been creatures of extreme anxiety, compelled to excellence by the intensity of their early relations with their parents.

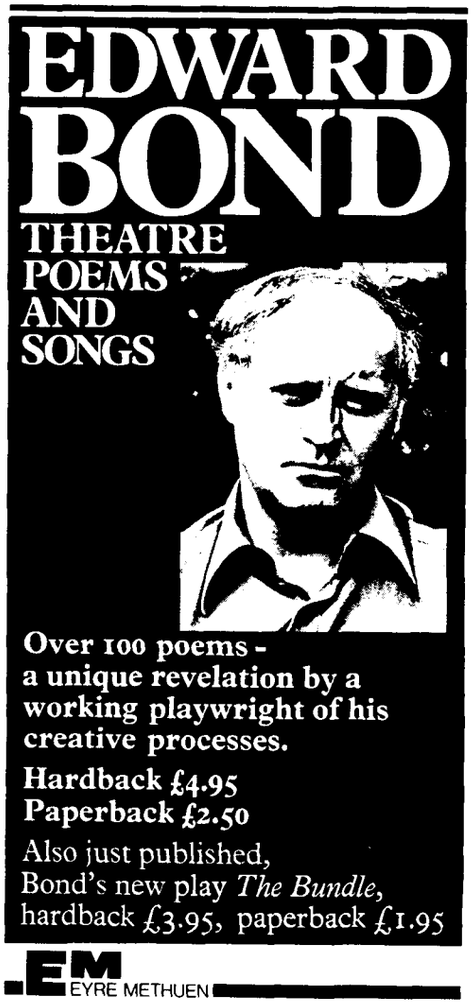
That, anyway, is Fuller's story. He has read up these champions' lives and uses what he has learnt shrewdly. The evidence is there and it is compelling; he makes good his contention that these are men with much of the obsessional neurotic about them. But like any runaway Freudian before him, he goes too far. Champions aren't champions because they are neurotic, they are champions because they are better than other people at chess, or boxing, or shove-ha'penny. You can be obsessive about a game, but a complete duffer at it; or a champion and completely sane. Fuller has written about champions notorious for the disorderliness of their lives; many others would simply not suit his theory. He is a romantic, anxious to equate the glory of a sportsman's achievement with the degree of his motivation. He sees his champions as 'distinct cases', different from other men, but he hardly gets on to what makes them distinct, which is the supremacy of their technique.

Rosemary Dinnage

Members Only

Delta of Venus by ANAÏS NIN *W. H. Allen* £4.95

I never believed the people who said pornography was boring, that they yawned all through *Oh! Calcutta* and read trash novels consecutively instead of picking out the sexy parts. However, terribly exciting and terribly wicked (sometimes) as porn may be, after 250 pages of breasts, buttocks, glistening thighs



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and erect members, the sheer avoidance of monotony comes to seem its most desirable quality.

Practical purposes apart, then, there only remains the poverty of the plot line linking orgasm to orgasm, the absence of characterisation and the channelling of ingenuity to just one end. Suspense is at a premium, suspension of disbelief grossly overworked; humour almost ruled out. (One unfortunate story here, about the *madame* of a brothel who never looks at men above the waist, culminates in her transports when a troop of Scotsmen march past with – of course – *nothing on underneath*. Kilts! Sporrans! Hairy legs and the sound of bagpipes!)

The rich old lecher – probably the fictional invention of a friend of Henry Miller's – who commissioned these stories for a dollar a page was luckier than the reviewer: he got his porn in instalments. Miller rebelled at having to write to order, so Anaïs Nin obliged; because, she says, the telephone bill was unpaid and one friend needed glasses, another needed dentistry and a third doctoring. It is a suspiciously uninventive list, but perhaps it is true; we know from Nin's diaries that she was obsessed with self-justification, with the need to be adored and relied on. She acquiesced, anyway, in the writing of 'perverse felicities' for money, with the help, it seems, of Krafft-Ebbing, the *Kama Sutra*, and contributions from all her friends:

> The homosexuals wrote as if they were women. The timid ones wrote about orgies. The frigid ones about frenzied fulfillments. The most poetic ones indulged in pure bestiality and the purest ones in perversions.

The client was said to be pleased, but left a message: 'Concentrate on sex. Leave out the poetry.'

In the end – Nin's diary, quoted here as preface, tells us – their erotic scribblings turned them stone-cold, and they learned to hate the old man who told them to cut out the poetry. But the reason why she finally agreed to publication, she has explained, was that she felt she had not been as brainwashed by male-slanted pornography as she feared; she had perhaps made some contribution to a female language for sex. Is there really any such thing discernible?

The answer is confused by the fact that, if we are to believe the author, the book is anyway a joint effort containing men's as well as women's fantasies; and also, given the blessed reciprocity of the matter, that what arouses men can arouse women – unisex pornography is no pipe-dream. Certainly, *Delta of Venus* concentrates at least as much on women's reactions as on men's, and while it contains voyeurism, exhibitionism, fetishism, homosexuality, incest, paedophilia, necrophilia – almost the lot, in fact – it is pretty free of sadism. Contempt and rage are absent, also the sense of sex as a kind of black mass. There is a touch of playfulness and disengagement. And if there is a typically Ninian theme to be spotted, it might be that of the woman fostering, sometimes successfully and sometimes not, an inhibited, awkward or reluctant lover.

The women characters, of course, are more *used* than the men; and meet a variety of fates, some triumphant but some disappointing. Should we connect this with the fact that Nin wrote these tales so compliantly, to save Henry Miller's integrity and pay her friends' bills? Internal evidence (as they say) suggests that in fact she may have thoroughly enjoyed her occupation, at least some of the time: like the actress in one of her stories, jewelled, frilled, rouged – and laughing, from her outrageous posture, at her dumbfounded admirers.

Zahir Jamal

Lord Janus

Conrad: The Moral World of the Novelist by R. A. GEKOSKI *Elek* £7.50

Even his admirers suspect that Joseph Conrad was a kind of double agent. It is not that he mastered a stately English prose while apparently continuing within its recesses to think in French and Polish. Nor is it quite that among narrative modes his genius instinctively favoured the hedged bet. Those shifting relativisms which periodically lift to reveal an inscrutable blank may well be the expatriate's trick of disguise; but what seems dubious about Conrad is not so much the secrecy of his allegiances as their apparent incompatibility. He is loyal to rival versions of human obligation, yet shows little sign of any serious embarrassment. His characters inhabit a world at once futile and purposeful. A profound conviction of the absurdity of their lot joins with a tenacious sense of its value to make up their predicament. We call this kind of outlook modern now, a tribute to Conrad's permanence. Some readers, however, may prefer to call it doublethink; and it is these who should find Dr Gekoski's study especially enlightening.

Gekoski's Conrad is a compassionate ironist wedded to the truth of things while disbelieving in its necessity for the bulk of humankind's well-being. The truth, Conrad repeatedly urged, is the fact of universal exile from all meaning. It is 'the immensity of pain' briefly glimpsed by Alvan Hervey in 'The Return', the demoralising threat to solidarity embodied in the nigger of the *Narcissus*; the corrosive horror that destroys Kurtz at the heart of darkness. In short, it is that cryptic void into which nearly all Conrad's fictions at some point empty. Perpetual visions of meaninglessness do not, however, make for stability or cohesion, yet Conrad regularly upheld what he considered were the imperatives of life: fellowship, courage, loyalty and hard work. Impressed on him during his merchant service years, these virtues reappear notably in the stalwarts who man his fictional ships. There can be little doubt about Conrad's enthusiasm for these specimens if we recall, for example, the depth of feeling that attends Captain McWhirr as he brings his craft through the typhoon.

There is, nevertheless, that troublesome void. How, readers wonder, can actions like McWhirr's be valuable in a valueless world? Conrad never questioned his sense of overriding futility, but a 'few simple notions' of good conduct continue to obtain in all the major novels. The contradiction, argues Gekoski, is more apparent than real. It is true that the novelist never abandoned his dark convictions, but they could not themselves 'constitute a form of action'. Rather, they are 'the given, the primary apprehension out of which all value must flow'. A thoroughgoing sense of futility logically incurs somewhere an awareness of its own absurdity. One response, amply recorded in the fiction, is suicide. Since, though, most of Conrad's people choose to live despite the lack of purpose in their world, another response may be possible. One can supply a purpose oneself and face the consequences. So we get in Conrad a tension between 'the facts and 'the necessities' of existence. The fact is that the universe wears an empty grin; necessity is the drive to continue as though it does not. From this it follows that the model inhabitants of the earth are those who never look up; and this, indeed, explains the place in Conrad's esteem of his unimaginative heroes.

However, the novels also put forward at least two other classes of hero and it is through these that the complexities of ethical behaviour emerge with a peculiarly Conradian twist. Life for the simple hero may be tough but never tragic. For the self-aware and introspective character it must often hold tragic potential since consciousness inevitably becomes a hollow and treacherous ordeal. There is, after all, really nothing to see but that grin. Where Conrad differs sharply from other writers of similar bent is in refusing his thinkers the relief of valid illusions. Awareness cannot be stifled nor can it stifle the truth. Those like Winnie Verloc and Axel Heyst who try to dodge the obligations of their own intelligence merely hasten their catastrophes. The harsh ideal to be striven for is the power to go through the motions of belief knowing that all belief fails. The simple captains may endure in ignorance; the self-conscious unfortunates must improvise with their barren lucidity. Finally, it seems, it is part of the ironic unmeaning of things that even the prospects of refuge in meagre purposes should be ordained by accidents of nature.

In fact, as Gekoski recognises, it matters only slightly whether Conrad's outlook seems philosophically respectable. What counts is that its separate orders of value came together in his imagination to create a mutually helpful tension. Conrad without his bitter wisdom turns into a moral petty officer simply running a tight ethical ship. Equally, without his attachments to comradeship, service and responsibility, he quickly drifts out of sympathy's reach into a private and lonely brainstorm. The most successful moments in Conrad are invariably found when his feelings pull two ways; moments such as Marlow's encounter with the ludicrously well-dressed accountant in *Heart of Darkness* where the latter's starched collars, vast cuffs and brushed hair seem both grotesquely hopeless and deeply heroic: '. . . in the great demoralisation of the land he kept up his appearance.'

Gekoski has the sensitive critic's feel for the unique relations great artists discover between seemingly irreconcilable perceptions. He is also able, from a scholarly command of his texts, to bring large amounts of relevant information discreetly to the reader's attention. His patient and reflective appraisals of individual novels span a generous range of related issues. Some, like Conrad's interest in the riskiness of values under stress, may be familiar; others, like his bids to exorcise the sceptic in himself, less so. All, however, can be profitably reconsidered in the suggestive light of this re-reading.

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John Jones

The Split

Idealist Epilogue by G. R. G. MURE *Oxford* £6.50

We have here a philosophical dialogue between two characters called *Ego* and *Alter Ego*. It is also a book about two real people, G. W. F. Hegel and G. R. G. Mure. Hegel was a 19th-century optimist. Mure is a 20th-century pessimist. Hegel thought the world had progressed, and was continuing to progress, towards freedom, peace and civilisation. Mure belongs to a generation of men who spent nine years of their adult lives fighting two bloody and perhaps futile wars. Hegel thought individual human beings had an inbuilt thrust towards higher and yet higher self-realisation: an evolutionary organicism owing much to Herder, of which Keats's 'On our heels a fresh perfection treads' is a poetic version, and Darwin's *Origin of Species* a late, specialised, scientific instance. Mure sees all around him what *Ego* calls

> . . . the spectacle of humanity *en masse*. I don't doubt that at least from the beginning of this century, perhaps earlier, the human species has declined in quality in inverse proportion to its increase in quantity; declined in thought and action, art and morality, indeed by any standard you can think of except perhaps health and expectation of life . . . The real danger with which the uncontrolled proliferation of mankind threatens us is not starvation . . . The danger is that, after a little token bloodshed and a great deal of dishonourable appeasement, men will lie flattened under the tyrannies which egalitarianism inevitably begets.

In answer to which *Alter Ego* remarks, in the final words of the book: 'I remind you again that the *Weltgeist* is not in a hurry.'

Will *Ego* and *Alter Ego* transpose into Mure and Hegel? And can we then continue their exchange after we have closed *Idealist Epilogue*, with *Ego* reminding *Alter Ego* in his turn that the *Welt* may blow itself up any minute, leaving its *Geist* facing the opposite way from Shakespeare's 'prophetic soul/Of the wide world dreaming on things to come'? (In one of his piquant sophistries Hegel argued that gunpowder humanises warfare because you don't have to get close to the man you kill. *A fortiori* with the atom bomb.)

No, *Ego* and *Alter Ego* won't transpose like this. There is too much Hegel and too much Mure in both of them. They are both patrician figures. They both grew up in a world where you learned French, Latin and Greek in childhood, and where you had to learn German as a young man because – Ladislaw's point in *Middlemarch* – you couldn't be competent in any of the great humane disciplines without it. They both want to philosophise about art and religion. For neither of them did philosophy begin with Frege or Leibniz or even Aristotle.

They both believe what Mure has elsewhere declared to be central to Hegel's thinking about the human self: a man is what he achieves. This is an un-Christian, anti-Romantic and very unfashionable view. It undercuts my facile introductory distinction between optimist and pessimist. Now is not the moment to apply it to Hegel, but to Geoffrey Mure.

He played a big part, between the wars and after the second, turning a second-rate Oxford college into a first-rate one. This was a matter of intellect, in personal example and teaching. Also of administration in his job as Warden of the place. And, strange to say, it was an athletic thing too. Strange, because nothing could be less like the all-round don as you meet him in those dread Oxbridge narratives than Mure. Anyhow, he took his college from near the bottom of the river to the top in the only five-year plan that ever really worked.

Meanwhile, his books on Aristotle and Hegel were appearing, and the swing away from metaphysics in the Thirties was leaving him increasingly isolated. The big *Study of Hegel's Logic* was a very lonely post-war road to follow. And now there are signs of a shift in his own emphasis. *Ego* still thinks that Hegel's Logic was his greatest achievement, but he also remarks dryly that 'the obscurity deepens as the scale diminishes'. In other words, Mure is tending towards the marvellously bold and youthful *Phenomenology*, to the larger-scale structure of the dialectic, to those huge gestures of thought that set Europe and Russia ablaze. And he is doing so in no mood of mental softening, but with a certain relaxation that makes this intellectual autobiography in dialogue form a work of brilliance and charm. The man I began by calling a pessimist declares, 'I still believe truth has survival value'. So has his book.

John Mole

Song of The Male Chauvinist Potato

(for Myrette Parsons)

Baked in my jacket
And snatched from the fire,
I'm the potato
All women desire.

My tubers excite them,
My skin to their touch
Has an earthy allure
which is almost too much.

In the vegetable rack
I'm a big success too
As I whisper endearments
Like 'mon petit chou'

To the anarchist carrots,
The suffragette swedes
And that poor libber leek
Who wants more than she needs.

But it's really the housewives
Who moisten their lips
As they peel me and mash me
Or slice me in chips;

How I quicken their fingers
And heat up their blood,
And though some of them call me
An arrogant spud –

Overbearing, insensitive,
Smug, God-knows-what,
They know I'm a *man*
And are glad that they're not!

Maurice Richardson

Heart of Darkness

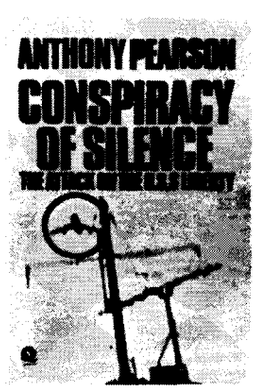
The River Congo by PETER FORBATH *Secker & Warburg* £7.50

> Then I saw the Congo creeping through
> the Black.
> Cutting through the forest with a golden track,
> Then along that River Bank, a thousand miles,
> Tattooed cannibals danced in files.
> Then I heard the boom of the blood-lust song
> And a thigh bone beating on an old tin gong . . .

Vachel Lindsay's poem was much admired in the early Twenties, especially at Cambridge. I first heard of it from the late Professor Lancelot Hogben, who told me that J. C. Squire (a former literary editor of the NEW STATESMAN) used to give an impassioned rendering, banging on the table with an ash-plant – or was it a cricket-bat? I wonder if it ever bore much relevance to reality, except perhaps as a sample of a white American's thinking about black Africa.

Another now totally forgotten implanter of Congo-consciousness in the English mind was

CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE
THE ATTACK ON THE U.S.S. LIBERTY
ANTHONY PEARSON



Why during the 1967 Six Day War, did the Israelis attempt to destroy a US spy ship sailing in international waters? Why did both nations perpetrate a world-wide cover-up of the incident? Why was an American nuclear submarine hiding in the waters of the Eastern Mediterranean?

Anthony Pearson reveals the sensational facts in this book.

Published 7th August £4.99

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the late Captain Charles Gilson, whose son now lives comfortably at Frinton on his father's earnings from writing boys' books. Gilson's masterpiece was *In the Power of the Pygmies*, serialised in the *Boys' Own Paper* during the first world war. It was remarkably vivid in its simple way, and featured a great volcanic sacrifice at the end. The Pygmies were adorable, of course.

More serious works, such as Stanley's *How I Found Livingstone*, with its copious scratchy but distinctly sinister illustrations, were in my prep-school library, and by the time I was 13 I was fairly well backgrounded in Congo-lore. So when, in 1959-61, the violent upheavals took place, they linked up in space-time with my Congo-consciousness. I'll never forget seeing poor Patrice Lumumba on television being taken away in a lorry by Moishe Tshombe's soldiers, one of whom seized him by his woolly hair and brutally jerked his head up for the cameramen. His wife was sitting by the roadside with her head in her hands.

These are some aspects of politics in the Congo covered by Peter Forbath, a former Time-Life correspondent, who was first blooded there in 1964, when he witnessed the brutal Simba uprising at Stanleyville. His publishers claim that Forbath has done for the Congo what Alan Moorehead did for the Nile. The claim seems fully justified. This is an excellent book which covers the whole area, geographically and historically. Forbath has a real flair for topographical description. Here he is on the Congo's source in South East and Central Africa, 1,000 miles south of the Equator, 1,000 miles from the coasts, 5,000 feet above sea level:

> This is flat, open country, a highland savanna thinly covered in scrub and twisted thorn trees, solitary silver baobabs and yellow elephant grass, and spotted with those giant sandcastle-like structures that the driver ants build. The vast bowl of the sky, ablaze with the fierce white heat of the African sun during the day, a chilling star-washed velvet at night, falls in a dizzying arc here to immensely distant horizons, where rough brown hills, another 500 or 600 feet above the sea, seem to mark off the edge of the world.

On flows the Congo; its history has been intertwined with Europe's since well before the Christian era. Now and again, especially in the zoological department, Peter Forbath gets a bit sensational: 'There are pythons in those trees and cobras and puff adders' (doubtful: you seldom find puff adders in rain forests). Before you know where you are, you are with the Monophysite pilgrims from Abyssinia in Jerusalem. The Portuguese under that gloomy figure, Prince Henry the Navigator, established themselves. Soon coastal exploration gave place to penetration into the interior. The Kingdom of Kongo itself provided some interesting examples of African genius. One was Affonso, as imposing and memorable as Othello, a key figure in the Christianisation of the Congo. After his death in 1542 (or 1543) a battle for the succession between Nkanga Mbemba, baptised Pedro and believed to be Affonso's oldest son, and Nkumbi Mpudi a Nzinga took place. The winner, Nkumbi, also known as Diogo, carried on a struggle against the São Tomé slavers, more because insufficient profit from the slave trade was reaching his treasury rather than from any democratic yearning.

Mysteries abound. Who were the Yakas (or Jagas) who seem to have sprung into the middle of the African scene in the 16th century and then vanished after a ghastly history of barely a single century. The best source for the Yakas is the chronicle of an English sailor who lived with them for two years, a pirate named Andrew Battell. In the 17th century the Dutch started moving south of the Equator and exploited tensions between the Congolese and the Portuguese. In the ensuing period of hopeless disorder a Congolese Joan-of-Arc arose called Kimpa Vita.

The last part of the book covers the 19th-century explorations, with which most people are more or less familiar, and the base and cunning role of King Leopold II of Belgium. In his 20 years of personal rule at least 5 million people were killed in the Congo. An epilogue brings the whole bloodstained story up to date.

Valentine Cunningham

Tortured Airs

Mrs Gaskell's Tales of Mystery and Horror
edited by Michael Ashley *Gollancz* £4.95

Axiomatically, someone should keep the minor fictions of major writers in print, and I suppose it doesn't particularly matter, so long as this desirable is achieved, what publishers actually think they're up to. Almost any of their tickets will do – even, at a pinch, putting out a mixed bag of Mrs Gaskell's stories on the 'Gollancz Fantasy and Macabre' label. Well, *almost* any ticket: for *Tales of Mystery and Horror,* suggesting as it does a whole clutch of stories like its curtain-raising 'The Old Nurse's Story', not only misconceives the real thrust and power of Mrs Gaskell's shorter fictions, but – worse – it even fails aptly to register the flavour of this selection of them.

Elizabeth Gaskell really had in her only one ghost-story that came anywhere near the Dickensian kind of gothic. Encouraged by Dickens, 'The Old Nurse's Story' appeared in the first Christmas Number of *Household Words* (1852) in 'A Round of Stories by the Christmas Fire'. In keeping with the other gruesomely Christmassy stuff, it's a mash of a family melodrama involving ghostly vengeance by the cruelly ill-treated dead on survivors who clutch fear to their grim bosoms in a snow-bound mansion while – would you believe? – unearthly organ music fills the tortured air. As good a piece of bad art as any of those filmic white Christmases with Bela Lugosi in Hollywood's castles of Utranto. But even this black virtuosity wasn't strong enough for Dickens, who wanted to monkey with the story's ending. Mrs Gaskell never saw eye to eye with him about ghosts. Helping jolly up *Household Words*'s next Christmas Number with 'The Squire's Story', she could manage only a robbery and a murder. And omitting the ghost was so dreadful a solecism at the Dickens Christmas party that he tried with a ghost-flaunting prologue and a change of title to wrench the spookless 'Crooked Branch' into line with the 'Haunted House' cycle in *All the Year Round*'s Christmas special of 1859. Small wonder, faced with what had become 'The Ghost in the Garden Room', that Mrs Gaskell wrote on 27 December of that year that she'd 'made a resolution never to write for *All the Year Round* again'.

'The Old Nurse's Story' is, of course, memorably ghostly enough, and remains intriguing not least because the ending of 'The Turn of the Screw' – where the governess holds on to young Miles before his putative haunter and is abused for her wickedness in doing so – reads oddly like an echo of Mrs Gaskell's finale. What's more, she does occasionally manifest the right sadistic zest for the mere horror story. The wounded child of 'The Old Nurse's Story' is enthusiastically joined by the murderous huntsman of 'The Squire's Story' who will ginger up some cheeky urchins by tossing them coins malevolently heated in the fire-shovel ('come and see the faces and the howling'), and by the father killed in a tussle with his son in 'The Doom of the Griffiths' ('a deep dent in the side of his head where the skull had fractured; his face blackened by the arrested course of the blood').

But her surer touch, even when she's being melodramatic, is for less simply catchy horrors than dead babies and brutalised parents. There's more, for instance, than the merely grisly to the moment when the crazed Manasseh kisses the lips of his beloved Lois while her body is still swinging on the gibbet after a false charge of witchcraft. For this is Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692, Manasseh is a religious fanatic, and Lois is the victim of the sort of Christian enthusiasm that Mrs Gaskell, a carefully cool Unitarian, continually deplores. The seriousness of her fiction's concern with the religious life is as strongly present in these stories as any other concern. And her spiritual hard-nosedness was clearly one reason why she so little relished wheeling on obligatory ghosts for the Dickens Christmas machine. The bogus religiosity so keenly incited by that trade in spookery – where ghosts provided evidence for wistfully troubled minds that there was still a holy Ghost – didn't wash with the rigorous clarities of intellectual Unitarianism.

Fantasy was not really to Elizabeth Gaskell's taste. 'The Doom of the Griffiths' was 'an old and rubbishy' story, 'the only merit whereof is that it is founded upon fact'. 'The Ghost in the Garden Room' was '*true,* more's the pity'. She preferred the factual reportage of *Mary Barton* and the historical research for 'Lois the Witch' to any imaginary contrivings. Here, notably, is a world of touchable domesticities, of warming pans and mince-pies, of a 'dinnery' atmosphere, of writing 'to make the mixture thick and slab'. Above all, a world of active anguish over women's all too terrestrial plights. Girls and women, she notes, are the perennial victims of witch-scares, as of unsentimental suitors like Nathan Huntroyd ('She'll do,' he grunts unamiably). 'Poor old women,' Lois is made to reflect of a ducked witch. Whole continents of feeling away from Michael Ashley's 'field of fantasy'.

Gavin Ewart

Creation Myth Haiku

After the First Night
The Sun kissed the Moon: 'Darling,
you were wonderful!'

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Coleman

Her Own Mistress

An Unmarried Woman (X) *Warner 4; Studio 2; Odeons, Kensington and Swiss Cottage*
Midnight Express (X) *Odeon, Haymarket*
The Last Wave (AA) *Cinecenta*
Lola Montès (A) *Camden Plaza*

Paul Mazursky is something of an odd man out in the current crop of newish, youngish American directors: he seems to find most people likeable and contrives to present them as such even when they are being stupid or nasty. He flies in the face of fashion even more blatantly by offering happy endings. The only one of his six films I recall with active distaste bordering on nausea is *Harry and Tonto*: there the sentimentality for once moved firmly stage centre. (It was probably that damn cat, Tonto, that helped: *Umberto D*, old man and his dog, remains uniquely uncloying in movies where affection for four-footed friends is central.) Mazursky, like almost everyone else, is also preoccupied with the instability of relationships between a man and a woman. In *An Unmarried Woman*, he has written and directed what is arguably his sharpest work to date. Erica (Jill Clayburgh) works part-time in a Manhattan art gallery during the day; her husband Martin (Michael Murphy) is on Wall Street; they have a 15-year-old daughter, Patti (Lisa Lucas), who coolly asks, 'Did the earth move for you?' when she wanders in to find mother lying glowing on the bed after a morning quickie. Everything appears to be going for this comfortably-off family, except that Martin is anxious ('I'm fantasising all the time') and tired. After lunch together one day, he suddenly starts blubbering in the street. He has had a mistress for over a year, a 26-year-old schoolteacher he met while she was buying a shirt in Bloomingdale's: he wants to live with her. Erica's face hardens – '*You* tell Patti that you're sorry' – and she wanders off, mouth hanging slightly open, to throw up on the sidewalk. The scene is beautifully, precisely played.

Erica has three women-friends she meets regularly, tough talkers. 'I hope Martin gets a permanent case of the clap and his pecker falls off,' utters one of them, unhelpfully, in a bar. At home, Erica addresses a mirror: ' "Balls," said the Queen. "If I had them, I'd be King." ' Her doctor tells her exhaustion is normal and proposes they meet for a drink. She stares at him: 'It's a pass, a definite fucking pass,' she says, and leaves. A lady psychotherapist tells her to turn off the guilt. 'I'd risk it with some new men . . . Take a chance.' So she beds a local stud, who has already made advances and warns her before they go to it, 'I'm a short-time guy.' After, when he suggests a return match, she hands him back his own words. Next day, she is jogging by the river, a regular morning habit, when Martin turns up. 'How are you?' he asks. 'I got laid last night.' He is going to LA. 'Good.' Then comes the crucial affair with Saul Kaplan (Alan Bates), an amiable, funny English painter. Divorced himself, he intends to spend the summer in Vermont with his two kids and wants her to come, too. Probably in love with him (Martin has appeared again meanwhile, deserted by his mistress and hoping to come back: she won't hear of it), Erica values her uneasy new independence too much. She may come down for the odd weekend. Last seen, she is staggering along the street, clutching a giant canvas, Saul's mad, typical gift. Freeze.

Evidently, for those who feel Erica really has it pretty easy compared with the majority of her abandoned sisters, Mazursky's work lacks socio-economic rigour: it could be said to skate, with ingratiating charm (nice apartment, chic art, al fresco musicians, a sympathetic therapist, the support of those women-friends), over what might be insoluble problems for a less favoured lady. After all, Miss Clayburgh is very attractive and Bates equally so, both relaxed and concerned, as her rabbit-out-of-the-hat lover. But Clayburgh is, in addition, an extremely useful actress, with a breaking, radiant smile that transforms her whole face and a capacity to intimate angry hidden depths. The mother-daughter interludes, which include a stand-up row after Erica has found Patti necking back at the flat with a nice boyfriend and turfed the lad out, sound as real as anything Mazursky has written. So do all the passages with Erica's keenly observed 'group' (excellent Kelly Bishop, Pat Quinn, and Linda Miller) not least when they loll about on Erica's bed remembering all 'the wonderful women' who used to dominate Hollywood screens. The group has its individual problems as well. Last, and without resorting to further 'impressionistic' criticism or description so out of favour with toilers in the fields of semiotics and structuralism, Mazursky *has* an often stunning talent for the revealing, off-beat, but right detail, whether it be something done, said or just spotted – as it were – out of the corner of an alert eye. A jangly dinner, with Saul invited – all good intentions – to meet Patti at his own request and she nervously comes on precocious, is tense, funny and true. Earlier, an irony before the marital crack-up, Erica has said, *of course* Patti will wed one day, talking of happily married couples. 'Name three,' says Patti. There is an awkward pause: point taken.

Should one have read *Midnight Express*, by Billy Hayes and William Hoffer, the take-it-on-trust authentic account of young Hayes's five years in Turkish jails for attempted hashish-smuggling and of his ultimate escape, before having seen Alan Parker's film of the same name? I think Mr Parker – of *Bugsy Malone* fame – would rather one hadn't, since Oliver Stone's screenplay is 'based' on the book and quite frequently permits itself a good deal of licence. To my mind, wise before the event, the original – more closely adhered to – might have made better cinema. There is a telescoping of prisoners and characters; Hayes's admitted and calmly presented homosexual affair with a Scandinavian fellow-prisoner is cut down to a kiss under a shower and a gentle rejection by Billy; the bestial prison boss, Hamidou, appears to have sodomised Billy in an early scene and to be about to repeat the act in a concluding one, where Billy manages to kill him, don his uniform and escape: in reality, the young American escaped by dinghy from an island to which he had been transferred. Perhaps the two biggest alterations come in a court-room speech, where Billy opens quietly in his address to a largely uncomprehending audience (as in the book, where he actually *forgives* them) and then goes on to lash out: 'For a nation of pigs, it sure is funny you don't eat 'em', and more of the same. It is certainly true that every Turk in sight is presented as an absolute sadist, save the judge whose hands are tied by a higher court in upping Billy's sentence to 30 years: he does it regretfully. The other thing I missed was presumably harder to reproduce: the book is utterly pervaded by the stench of open latrines, with filth and lice recurring items – the movie, while hardly a commercial for hygiene, soft-pedals this.

What is not played down is the constant violence. There are torture-scenes to satisfy some spectators and revolt the rest; and, in particular, the gratuitous introduction of Billy seen biting off the tongue of a double-dealing trustie and spitting it out. Alan Parker, very concerned to establish his film is 'Fiction' (and yet there *is* the book, and Billy Hayes – here done in a convincing, James-Deanish fashion by Brad Davis, his first feature – exists), justifies this latter invention by the need to get Billy into the criminally-insane block. One or two colleagues, coming fresh to the 'true' story, found it gripping, even moving. Except for a faint sensation of queasiness, it left me untouched. Man's inhumanity to man, the illogic of various courts and judiciaries, are daily TV fare, after all. An unpleasant piece of work, of dubious intent.

The Australian Peter Weir established a rapid reputation for himself as an atmospheric director: *The Cars that Ate Paris* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. It's a dangerous reputation to have, as *The Last Wave* surely demonstrates. A decent, somewhat cardboard Sydney lawyer, David (Richard Chamberlain), family man with two kids, gets caught up with the defence of some city-dwelling aborigines who have killed one of their number. The opening has its quota of effective menace, leaving one tolerably agog. In a desert hamlet, a vicious rainstorm pelts down from a blue sky. Kids rush for shelter into a schoolhouse, great hailstones crash through a window, a child is cut by flying glass. David has nightmares of a figure vaguely approaching him with a carved stone. The nightmare man emerges in life as Chris, one of the aborigines seen elsewhere hunting down the dead man, Billy. A death bone figures, David is sensed as mysterious inheritor of some ancient civilisation, there is a crazy journey – led by Chris – through sewers to a painted cavern, depicting some holocaust. David comes out on to a beach and that towering last wave. The message escapes me.

Two apologies. I can dig up only one 'nasty' film shown during Bryan Forbes's time at EMI and that was 'AA': *And Soon the Darkness*. Victor Erice made *Spirit of the Beehive*, not Carlos Saura. And a recommendation: see Max Ophul's last film, the 1955 *Lola Montès* in a longer version than usual, at the Camden Plaza.

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Television

Julian Barnes

Jaw Jaw Jaw

I've been brooding this week on how to spread lockjaw. It's quite prevalent, according to David Coleman, among the Nandi tribe in Kenya; and the wise locals prepare for any future feeding problems by knocking out one of the bottom teeth of each infant Nandi. But what's the easiest way to spread the tetanic spasm over here? And, more specifically, how could you explode it into 'the Regent Suite at Slater's Hotel', as the cardboard Granada set of *M'Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen* is so improbably named? Do you slip a punctured tin of salmon into the catering stock? Release a few imported midges into the candlelit air? Or – more simply and pleasingly – just bowl over the principal speakers and give them a whopping injection up the bum? Bad TV programmes usually induce boredom, irritation, smugness, relief; but *M'Lords* sets off a jaundiced aggression which argues for the immediate discomfiting of its smirking, tuxedoed participants. It makes a vision of David Kossoff, Lord Longford, Clive Jenkins, Norman St John Stevas and the like, each with a feeding-straw inserted through a missing bottom tooth, even more engaging than it might normally be.

You can see that at some distant planning stage the show might have seemed almost a good idea. Invent a dining club, call it by a silly name – The Vicious Circle – and invite reasonably well-known people to come and propose other well-known (absent) people for ironic titles like Nice Guy of the Year, Diplomat of the Year, etc. You pay them, well, £250 per nob if the TV critic of the *Spectator* (who bungled his chance of quick cash) is to be believed; then hire a cosy chairman (Peter Jones) and a joke MC. However, by this stage (or well before) it might have struck you that with after-dinner speaking it's very hard to tell parody from the real thing (and who cares, anyway?); also, that well-known people don't like being rude about other well-known people, even for £250. So it has proved. The black-tie operators trot out their favourite stories (proving that there is very nearly such a thing as a free lunch) and are quite beastly nice about everyone – all except St John Stevas, who came up with a dazzling put-down of Katherine Whitehorn: 'In future, pick on someone your own size – like Cyril Smith.' The disorientating wit of this remark (or perhaps the disorientating unreality of the whole show) made Miss Whitehorn jumpily refer to someone called Mervyn Pyke; not that the old rubber-band man, Magnus Peake, appeared to notice.

The acting wasn't much better in *A Curtain Call for Molière* (BBC-2), the French bio-serial currently occupying the death seat opposite *Out*. As soon as the credits rolled, with a disembodied lace cuff turning the pages of an old book to the sound of a baroque flute, I didn't rate its chances of survival. In the first eight minutes, Molière's dad told the hyperactive Jean-Baptiste, 'Leave your books, dreamer, we are going to the Louvre', and the young dreamer had greeted a letter from his girl friend by kissing the parchment and exclaiming to his Martini-ad playmates, 'Louis, Geneviève – God exists!' *(skittishly)* 'I shall inform Descartes!' It sounded worse in French, moreover, being filled with the gay Gallic inflections of youth and adventure; so I switched conscienceless back to the seamy, grainy reality of Thames's *Dehors*. During the first break, I caught the Martini girl friend sitting improbably in the middle of a provincial moor with nothing but a huge bunch of irises for company, until J-B came galloping over the horizon; he dismounted, she tossed the irises over her shoulder, and ran towards him as if she knew he knew the lady loved Milk Tray. At the second break, the dreamer

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Craig Raine

In The Dark

They were both in the dark.
She lied about her age,

the young Coldstream guard
about his inexperience.

While he took her to pieces
slowly, she watched a spider's web

as it shone in the sun
like a long-playing record.

Laid out on the grass,
her shrivelled tights, the wings

of her nylon bra. Virgins.
She thought about, yes,

the Okey-Cokey
and wanted to laugh . . .

Six months later, the weather
turned conveniently cold –

a coat was possible indoors.
All the mirrors grew convex,

she fingered the globe
in its pregnant question mark.

Her father's miniatures
were little models of perfection –

the Vatican, St Paul's,
Westminster Abbey and Cathedral,

all made from Safety Matches.
He chopped their busbies off

with a tiny grunt,
as if he knew . . .

The brown Aspirin bottle
held a genie of cotton wool

and five hundred bitter wishes.
Counting carefully,

she vomited at the forty-first.
A week. Another week.

She felt the pain of liver
writhing on the pan,

turned off the gas and crawled,
past an infinity of stair-rods.

God danced on his cross
at the foot of her bed

like Nijinsky having a heart attack . . .
Brought by the police, her father

listened in his dressing gown.
She wouldn't come out of the river

or give up the shoe-box
under her arm. Headlights,

headlights and questions.
A fifteen year old face,

shiny as a peeled lychee, saying,
'I didn't do anything, Dad'.

The grey pylons backed her up,
pulling out their empty pockets –

protesting innocence.

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was having his goods auctioned and was flung into a prison full of Sade snarlers, including the obligatory marrow-breasted nymphomaniac. He should count himself lucky the *greffier* didn't look like Norman Rodway's impeccable Bryce.

'We are everywhere and the one place we aren't is on television . . . television is so powerful and we want some of that power.' The 'we' in question were an articulate bunch of homosexuals on *Gays: Speaking Out* (Thames); though their chance of even a minor slice of power can't have been much improved by this 'closet programme' as one of them called it with the proper contempt. For a start, it wasn't networked. Easy enough to put on a liberal show containing no hardhat anti-gay faction and broadcast it only in the soft South-East; where it should have been beamed were those parts of the country where police still train by Black-and-Deckering holes in the partitions of public lavatories. You couldn't help sympathising with the Lady-Barnett-voiced lesbian who said, 'I think this type of programme is ghastly . . . we're bored with saying the same thing to the same interviewers.'

Llew Gardner – impishly addressed as Larry by a loose-tongued gay – appeared to believe that merely by fronting the show he had made his position as a tolerant, laid-back liberal clearer than even he wanted it to be, and contented himself with a few sympathetic sneers. 'I'm not being funny, but do you want a gay James Bond?'; 'How did you do it on the railway?'; finally, after a serious point about the reluctance of footballers and athletes to come out, Gardner was roundly booed for his throwaway, 'Well, I had my doubts about the Scottish football team.'

It was hard not to share the gays' frustration at the superficiality of TV coverage – particularly when the very next programme, by one of those networking coincidences, had the editor of the *New Review* chuckling sardonically at the recent proposal for a gay soccer team. 'What an incentive to score a goal,' he quipped on *What the Papers Say* (Granada), after the voice-over man had read a news item in the authentic radio-poof voice, whose sing-song tone none of the three-dozen gays on display for the previous hour had remotely approached.

No gay athlete has so far come out in the *Commonwealth Games* (BBC-1); though given David Coleman's habit of putting things just a little askew ('Married to the hurdler Bill Hartley, she really *has* prepared herself thoroughly'), it's probably just as well. The slightly cracked patriotism of the commentary team (these are, after all, meant to be the friendliest international games) is so inapt as to be almost endearing. Coleman produced an absurdly Fostocentric rant during the 10,000 metres, as Big Bren chugged slowly away from the lockjaw brigade and the rest of a sub-standard field; and Frank Bough's view of the hammer, in which Scottish, English and Irish chuckers glumly filled places three to seven, was 'And that turned out to be a *completely British* event, apart of course from the gold and silver medals.' The less said the better, though, about Big Bren's comment on Henry Rono, the Kenyan booked to inflict defeat and blisters on him in the 5,000 metres: 'He looks like an animal when he's running.' Was this Ramseyan condescension, or was it the highest tribute that one athlete can pay to another?

Theatre

Ian Hamilton

Blasts from the Past

The Women Pirates Anne Bonney and Mary Read *Aldwych*
The Eclipse *Royal Court*
The Dark Horse *Comedy*

'We tend to be taught history as something immutable, inherited, fixed,' writes Steve Gooch in his programme note to *The Women Pirates,* thus warning us not only that he is of an essentially ponderous disposition but also that he likes to use one extra, unnecessary word in many of his sentences; just in case we too prefer to take things slowly when we think. Gooch, it is evident, has been thinking a lot lately and, in common with some other of the vaunted Younger Playwrights, he has been thinking about the Past. The Past, you see (and Steve explains this in much pompous detail in his note), is Anybody's. Mug up a slice of it, stir in a few weighty, up-to-date Preoccupations, agree with yourself that it would be folly to simulate period dialogue – indeed that many a rib-tickler arises if you don't – and you will have a work of drama that is colourful because it is remote, serious because it is researched, and relevant because you've made it so. Best of all, you don't need to have much sensitivity to the present; it's sufficient that you have picked up a few bulky attitudes towards it and are bold enough to deliver these with a caricaturist's vigour.

What then, with so much on its side, goes so lamentably wrong with *The Women Pirates*? Well, for a start, Gooch – having selected his bit of history – can't decide which aspect of it he most wants to sculpture into topicality. The chosen tale is of two fearsome 18th-century ladies whose separate and manifold misfortunes lead them to become co-pirates on a vessel in the Caribbean. When they meet, Mary is rigged out as a man. Anne falls for him/her and the inevitable unmasking involves thought-provoking sexual ambiguities. To get to this peak moment in the play we have been led, as children, by the hand through each of the girls' differently deprived early lives and we have been urged to ponder various types of colonialist and capitalist exploitation. At no point is it clear how these themes are meant to fit with Gooch's spelt-out broodings on Gay Lib and Women's Rights. The topics are simply *there,* like lumps in a porridge.

And maybe they would be just about swallowable if the fun bits of the play – the

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swashbuckling narrative, the jokes, the frequently interpolated songs – were in fact any sort of fun. More damaging, though, than his solemnity is Gooch's notion of what's worth a laugh. Anachronistic banter – especially if it involves the use of 'fuck' or 'crap' – he regards as absolutely sure-fire, and we are certainly meant to chuckle at the vivid out-of-placeness of lines like 'I'll cut your ears off' – 'Ha Ha, you and whose army?', or 'He's done nothing but sit on his backside. He's a pain in the arse.' And, of course, any titillating angle he can get on the transvestite business he seizes with both fists. Hence, our less than heartfelt response to downbeat songs which lament that 'We are women in a man's world'. The songs in fact are leaden throughout, and the chorus quite rightly delivered them with the air of men who wished they were playing *Pirates of Penzance*. One can excuse their listlessness in the music department rather more easily than in the interminable fight-scenes; these are farcically crude and unconvincing – all slaps and sticks. With a play so sprawlingly self-indulgent and so idly thin on even the beginnings of characterisation, it's hard to separate the quality of the acting from the shortcomings of the roles. It must be said, though, that Diana Quick (if a bit too *Avengers* for my taste) and Charlotte Cornwell performed manfully in the circumstances.

More recent history provides the backcloth to Leigh Jackson's *Eclipse*: this time, the British battling the commies in Malaya. Again, the programme directs us to think of the play as having something new to say about the past; there are chronologies of Malayan historical landmarks, and photographs of British soldiers (*c.* 1950) hacking their way through the jungle, arresting rubber-tappers and playing cricket in Kuala Lumpur. In fact, the play's central figure – a crumbling ex-colonial dictating his memoirs to his loyal batman – could as easily have hailed from India or South Africa. Accordingly, there is much recalled detail of the Malayan show, but the character is really based on the stock notion of what buffers of this sort are like; irascible, pathetic and more or less totally against the use of personal pronouns. 'It was a different world. There was a balance' is the kind of thing he collapses into between reminiscences, and the Disneyland jungle noises which are used to distract us from the sound of shifting scenery are presumably meant to resemble the noises that go on in his head. Little wonder, then, that when his wife turns up from London accompanied by a chap he's never seen before, he thinks the worst. A bout of dinner-table sadism forms the meat of the second act, with the crusty cuckold taunting the interloper even as he pours his wine. Of course, *we* already know that the wife has no intention of deserting the old chap and can therefore savour the irony when he draws his service pistol and shoots the lover dead. But why was the wife, who could have restrained him from this error, so long absent from the stage? When last seen, she was fetching her hapless friend a whisky. By the time she returns, a good 15 minutes later, he's a corpse. So much for craftsmanship. Indeed, Mr Jackson is altogether somewhat ruthless about removing unwanted characters from the stage so that long private conversations can take place. Apart from Ann Bell as the wife, the cast seems uneasy about how to elevate this light-weight yarn. Paul Rogers, in particular, seems to spend much of the play dreading the moment when he will have to speak his closing lines: 'I couldn't face being alone . . . I wonder . . . will they understand?'

The Dark Horse by Rosemary Ann Sissons opens with Edward Woodward sauntering on to the stage in Tudor gear. The audience applaud because they remember him as Callan. Depressingly, the script had prepared itself for the event and has him say with mock-surprise: 'You mean you know me?' More claps and tee-hees. Then the punchline: 'I am Jasper Tudor.' Riotous guffaws. The play maintains this chummy relationship with the audience as it unfolds the saga of Jasper's efforts to install his nephew on the English throne. It's all agreeably unpretentious and fast-moving, with the author prepared to cut almost any corner in order to keep the fans agog. And with success: most of them looked as content as if they were at home watching the whole thing on telly.

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Laurence Lerner

In Memoriam 17 June 1977

Von Braun is dead; the elders are in flower.

A ball of fire exploding in the night
Left its soft trail. Below, a house disgorged
Plaster and teeth, pots, lino, chair-legs, dust,
And bones and blood into the dark.
A jar of elder wine was vaporised.
That was my uncle's house in S.E.10.
Above, sparks tumbled, fading in the noise.

The troops moved in, and sulked. The men
they'd killed
For killing them were dead; and all around
The women sulked in German. Only
the white
Tumultuous elders greeted them
with blossom.
Von Braun surrendered to a private; took
His tanks of fuel, his notebooks,
and his team
Of tumbling rockets, clicked his heels,
and said
'I am Von Braun. Take me to
Mister Truman.'

He tossed his rockets up: some on the moon
And some on London. Some are
singeing space,
Some stream around us, some came
tumbling down,
One on my uncle. Out of his box of bones
He was torn, shredded.
He drank his elder wine through every pore.

Uncle, here is a message. June has come,
Your sons are well, two men are on
the moon,
There is a carpark where your house
once stood,
Von Braun is dead, the elders are in flower.

Sport

Russell Davies

Copperbottom

If I were an athlete . . . all right, then, if I were the non-playing captain of the Welsh bowls team, I don't think I would have found it easy to gear myself up for these Commonwealth Games. Any gold medal looks nice on the mantelpiece, of course, whether it comes from the Olympics or from the Drag Night Talent Contest at the Welder's Arms: at all levels, one can take a pride in winning. There are some types who can't seem to take a pride in much else. But there's something about the Commonwealth set-up that I'm sure would put the mockers on any motivation. I just wouldn't be able to believe all these commentatorial noises about the 'world-class field' I was in. The thought would be constantly running through my mind that among the notable absentees were my hated rivals Yuri Gnashchenko of the Soviet Union, Guenther Sobstoff of East Germany and Dick Albumblatt of the United States. Even the European Games – another demi-monde event, as it were – gives me, I'd reflect, the opportunity of losing heavily to Sobstoff and complaining about the facilities, bursaries, pharmaceuticals and invigorating threats he'd been showered with since his muscle-bound infancy. Beating the socks off a couple of Cayman Islanders does not offer this satisfaction (always supposing you can beat them all).

But the Games at Edmonton are politically important, if only because they have a good chance of being conducted in a morally exemplary fashion, and an atmosphere which actually benefits the participants. The Family of Nations business is not all rhetoric: it can actually sustain itself through conversation, since this Family, like most others, does all speak the same language. The use of English is one remnant of Empire that really can be turned to good account. I do not personally think it helps much for the family's Matriarch to appear in person, if she's only going to grate upon the ear with piercingly uninventive homilies ('it is not the numbers that matter, but the spirit in which you come' – sounds like a sperm count) and then rap the unruly Quebecois over the knuckles with a couple of reminders of the allegiance they owe. ('As Head of the Commonwealth, I . . . As *Queen of Canada*, I . . .') It was also a bad idea to give Mr Trudeau, who received Her Majesty in Y-fronts and water-wings or some such, another opportunity to demonstrate what a daredevil, or card, or possibly yob he has become since his wife joined the Party (I mean the endless world-wide one that Bianca Jagger's always arriving at, or leaving.) But the athletes on these occasions have a dignity not even inaugural speeches can dispel.

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One undoubted bonus for UK athletes is that they are allowed to represent their particular country of origin. I note that even the Isle of Man has secured a bronze (doubtless in the three-legged race). I had feared that my own country was due to take a bit of a dive in the medals table – and indeed, what we shall do on the track when Berwyn Price packs it in I am still not sure. But I see we now have a gold-medal weightlifter as well. His name, Burns, is the signpost to Wales's sporting future. Gone are the days of the massed Joneses. Nowadays, any Welsh team is liable to be well sprinkled with Toshacks and Kryzwickis, competing for their places with eager ranks of Flynns, Callaghans and, apparently, Burnses. Half the Joneses you meet are coffee-coloured. I like to see Wales do well these days, because it upholds the doctrine of racial impurity.

Ale, boys, is the great enemy. The fashionable faith in South Wales at the moment is not rugby at all but beer, for which rugby just gives you a taste. The fastest-growing sports are those indoor ones where a pint pot is always within reach: pool and darts. This will do nothing for the Welsh physique, which is subject to a low, and slipping, centre of gravity at the best of times. Worse news still is that the ladies of the valleys are going for darts in an even bigger way than the men. This means bigger and lower bums than ever. On everybody, heredity being what it is. I foresee a nation of lady wrestlers, at best.

I must admit that what put this in my mind was not the Commonwealth Games at all, but the Colgate European Ladies' Golf Championship from Sunningdale. A lot of trousers were worn by these European Ladies, most of whom were Americans. And American ladies have peculiar tastes in trousers. Flock-wallpaper patterns seem to be in at the moment, accentuating every hint of vastness in the seat, and tubularity in the thigh. The cameras tended to retreat every time anybody bent over. I do not mean to be sexist about this – and in any case, how could I compete with the BBC commentator who groaned, 'How can you look like she does and make a shot like that?' (It was a good shot, I ought to add, and the lady in question one of those whose personal publicity is keener to interest you in the notion that she loses decoratively than in the possibility she might win.)

Something can obviously be done about the fashions. Skirts won't do, as the tournament poster very well illustrated: you need a virtually cardboard material that won't blow about, and then you still have a rather horrid expanse of brawny leg exposed above your sockless, clumping golf brogues. No, no. But this can be fixed. What can't very easily be changed is the ultimate goal of the sport. At the moment, what it offers is a future as a Rich American Woman, with flock-wallpaper outfits in increasingly chi-chi *étoffes*. The life of a tournament professional, as soon as you think of a woman doing it, seems somehow empty of fulfilment. But I withdraw that remark immediately, before 'fulfilment' can be taken to mean house-pride, babies, looking after a man. I don't mean that at all. To rediscover what I do mean, I should have to study a playback of all those richly patterned Jo-Annes bending over to retrieve their balls. Somebody's balls.

Benedict Nightingale is on holiday.

Rock Music

Mark Kidel

Words Fail

Resurrection Shuffle by ANGUS WOLFE MURRAY *Peter Owen* £5.25

If Faust had come from the Gorbals, he would have sold his soul to rock'n'roll. The archetypal late-20th-century descent into Hell is the rock success story, the rise to stardom and fall into exploitation and misery, a tragic myth that is repeatedly mistaken for a dream of heaven. All the kids know that Jimi and Janis died from an overdose of celebrity rather than drugs, but they still climb like lemmings on to the rock machine, hoping to obliterate a past and a future too grim to contemplate.

In the 1940s and 1950s, stardom was usually portrayed as an unequivocal liberation from the constraints of the material world. The myth of serene superstardom reigned supreme regardless of Hank Williams and Billie Holiday, the forgotten victims of the road. When the sad truth emerged, the myth became inverted into a form of necrophilia, the worship and celebration of all the casualties of the hard climb to success. There even came a time when it was better (for sales at least) to be dead – like Buddy Holly, Jim Reeves and Otis Redding – than merely over the hill. The naïveté of the original 'overnight success' format was succeeded by the relative sophistication of films like *Stardust* and *Flame,* their heroes preyed on by the rockbiz vampires and bound for soulless destruction.

The punks started out – and perhaps some may continue – wise to the almost inevitable corrupting power of fame. Rock'n'roll, for all its revolutionary potential, is inextricably tied up with the cold logic of the market-place. Rock is much more about 'shifting units' (as they romantically talk about record sales) than about the expression of personal creativity. Even the punks, gobbled up by the record companies, had to face that. The publicity necessary to launch and sustain a musician or a band relies on the manufacture of image, the essential component of product identification, and it is this factor, along with the pressures from accountants and showbiz executives, which has contributed most to the uneasy unreality of the rock-star's life. Cut off from the nagging but ultimately reassuring demands of everyday life, many superstars appear to become increasingly confused about the boundary between image and truth.

Bob Dylan – elusive and forever changing – is one of the few rock heroes to have survived this progress. So is the fictional narrator and protagonist of Angus Wolfe Murray's second novel, *Resurrection Shuffle.* He is a battered survivor of the rock inferno, aware of all the ghastly pressures, but always just about transcending them. The first-person narrative, obliquely intercut with extracts from interviews with the star, streams through vivid impressions of a hectic US tour and sharply-drawn recollections of a Scottish working-class childhood. Wolfe Murray's hero – like Dylan – is a poet, and he knows it, almost a *voyant* as Rimbaud called himself, a man of unusual sensitivity, his nerves and emotions painfully exposed to the vicissitudes of the world. The wild and decadent horror of the rock road is extremely well and authentically caught, although the author tries – in tune with the excesses of both rock music and journalism – a little too hard, piling on the verbal effects like a torrent of wailing bottleneck notes in a Rory Gallagher solo. It dazzles, but it is sometimes not very subtle. To be fair to Murray, however, this may be a stylistic nod to the unsubtle nature of the rockbiz and media existence. Paradoxically, his hero is exceptionally bright and articulate for a rock-star, so literary at times that it is impossible to forget that his creation was aided by a Scottish Arts Council grant.

Resurrection Shuffle is as much about its hero's gropings beyond the cocoon of his star's isolation and a quest for identity as it is about the destructive qualities of the rock'n'roll life. It is this, undoubtedly, which makes it a good deal more interesting than most rock-inspired writing so far. Murray's star rises way above the cardboard cut-out world of the conventional myths and legends: his agonising confusion, trapped between the lost innocence of his childhood rapport with nature and the almost cynical disillusion of his later years, helps make him a very credible character.

The novel fails, however, to express the rawness of rock, the basic energy that is so central to its magic: the printed word, however skilfully manipulated, cannot reach those areas of the contemporary non-verbal sensibility. There will never be, for that reason, anything like a satisfactory rock'n'roll novel.

THE STATE OF FICTION
A SYMPOSIUM

with contributions from A. Alvarez, Brian Aldiss, Kingsley Amis, Martin Amis, Paul Bailey, J.G. Ballard, A.L. Barker, Stan Barstow, David Benedictus, Malcolm Bradbury, Melvyn Bragg, John Braine, Christine Brooke-Rose, Jeremy Brooks, Brigid Brophy, A.S. Byatt, Angela Carter, Isabel Colegate, William Cooper, Robert Coover, Elaine Feinstein, Eva Figes, Nicolas Freeling, Giles Gordon, Patricia Highsmith, Michael Holroyd, Dan Jacobson, Diane Johnson, Jennifer Johnston, Gabriel Josipovici, Mervyn Jones, Francis King, David Lodge, Ian McEwan, Olivia Manning, Stanley Middleton, Brian Moore, Helen Muir, Edna O'Brien, Julia O'Faolain, David Plante, Barbara Pym, Frederic Raphael, Piers Paul Read, Alan Ross, Alan Sillitoe, Julian Symons, Emma Tennant, Paul Theroux, Anthony Thwaite, William Trevor, Peter Vansittart, Auberon Waugh, Raymond Williams, Angus Wilson, A.N. Wilson.

in the summer issue of

THE NEW REVIEW

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from The New Review, 11 Greek Street, London W1.

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Weekend Competition

No 2527 **Set by Sir Gel**

Time for another in our series of poetical updatings. W. H. Auden's version, please, of Keats's *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer,* the *Ode to a Nightingale* or the *Ode on a Grecian Urn.* Max 16 lines; by 24 August.

Result of No 2524 Set by S. J. Sharpless

Sydney Smith reported someone's idea of heaven as 'eating pâté de foie gras to the sound of trumpets'. We wanted to hear what your ideas were.

Report **by Len the Unlucky**

Thanks for all the get-well cards, embroidered samplers, etc. Most touched. But what a comp with which to greet my return to duty. Wake up, you dozy shower: Arthur Marshall is currently compiling a new selection of winning entries for hardback publication, and I can tell you this is no time to slouch on your laurels. A scornful Wellington is all we choose to reward you with this week.

Clear skies
(No flies)
Stream trickles
(No prickles)
Wild flowers
(No showers)
Salmon mayonnaise
(No 'take-aways')
A dry Moselle
('Kits' are Hell)
And after this?
Amorous bliss.

CHALAK

Kelly with writer's cramp, Baird
on a pittance,
Hopkins and Sharpless refused
Comp admittance,
Ransome and Fagg lying gagged
in the wings:
These are a few of my favourite things.

Parrot unperched, Corleone in ashes,
Tears of rejection on Griffiths' eyelashes,
Watson and Anthony tied up with strings:
These are a few of my favourite things.

When the Comp's won, when defeat stings,
When I feel like hell,
I simply remember my favourite things,
And still I don't fee-ee-ee-eel so well.

BILL GREENWELL

There the ad-men cease from troubling.
There the hucksters are at rest;
There the whiter shades of whiteness
Leave the housewife unimpressed.

Poetry, the arts and music
Dominate the TV scene.
No more Redskins bite the dust
And no one's heard of Hughie Green.

No foul shriek of vile Punk Rocker
Rends the silence of the night:
And on pleasant summer evenings
We can watch the pigs take flight.

ROBERT BAIRD

What wondrous life is this I lead,
A *Blest Competitor* indeed!
Prizes each week in showers descend
As though my luck would never end:
Under my own name three or four,
And under pseudonyms five more,
While every try, however goofed,
Receives a cheque, inflation proofed.
Meanwhile, below, my rivals pine,
Unable to compose a line;
And while they frizzle for their sins
I am the only one who wins.

PETER PETERSON

All I want is a plate of chips,
Ketchup 'andy for lucky dips,
With silk to wipe me lips,
Ah, woodntit be luvverly?

Lots of cockles for me to eat,
Pint of Theakston's would be a treat,
Somewhere to park me feet,
Ah, woodntit be luvverly?

All I want is a kidney stew,
Cup of steaming 'ot Typhoo,
And Alka-Seltzer too,
Ah, woodntit be luvverly . . . luvverly
. . . luvverly.

WILL BELLENGER

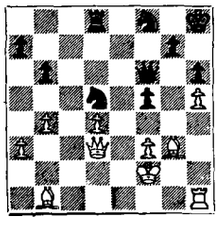
Tony Miles

Chess

No 95 **Karpov v Korchnoy**

The world championship match began with a string of boring draws. In the first six games all the aggression and ideas came from the challenger, with Karpov adopting Muhammad Ali tactics of lying on the ropes waiting for Korchnoy to punch himself out.

The fifth game, the first of any real interest, was adjorned in the diagram position. Korchnoy



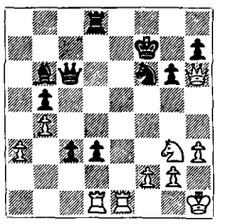
(White) has a clear advantage and it was popularly thought that he might win. There are two main threats – BR4, and B-K5 followed by QxP. The challenger's camp spent most of their time analysing 1 . . . Q-N4 when, it seems to me, the simple 2.B-R4, QxP; 3.QxP gives White excellent winning chances in the ending.

The passive 1 . . . N-K2 is hopeless: 2.B-K5, Q-B2 (or Q-N4; 3.P-B4! Q-N5; 4.R-N1, Q-R5ch; 5.Q-N3, QxQch; 6.RxQ, N-K3; 7.B-R2, N-Q4; 8.R-N6 wins.) 3.R-N1, N-K3; 4.B-R2, N-Q4; 5.R-N6 etc. I thought Black's best try was the semi-waiting 1 . . . Q-K2. Then if 2.B-R4, N-B3; or 2.QxP, Q-K6ch; So 2.B-K5, Q-N4! 3.QxP (Black may well be threatening P-B5, and 3.R-N1, Q-R5ch leads nowhere) Q-Q7ch; 4.K-N3, N-K6; 5.Q-R3, (forced, to prevent Q-N7ch) N-K3! with tremendous counterplay. (6.QxN, Q-N7ch; 7.K-B4, N-Q4ch; 8.K-K4, Q-K7ch; 9.K-B5, R-B1ch! 10.K-N4 – or 10.K-N6, Q-N7ch; 11.Q-N4, N-K2mate – Q-N7ch wins for Black)

In fact Karpov sealed **1 . . . N-R2,** a move completely overlooked by Korchnoy's analysts. The game continued **2.B-K5, Q-N4; 3.QxP, Q-Q7ch; 4.K-N3, N(2)-B3; 5.R-N1, R-K1; 6.B-K4?! N-K2! 7.Q-R3** (After 40 minutes thought – symptomatic of bad adjournment analysis) **R-QB1; 8.K-R4, R-B8; 9.Q-N3, RxR?!** (9 . . . Q-N4ch seems to give good drawing chances) **10.QxR** (Now White is probably winning again) **K-N1; 11.Q-N3, K-B2; 12.B-N6ch, K-K3?!?** (An astonishing attempt to unsettle Korchnoy in time trouble) **13.Q-R3ch, K-Q4; 14.B-K4ch???** (Incredible! 14.B-B7ch, K-B3; 15.Q-K6ch, K-N4 – or K-N2, QxNch etc – 16.Q-B4ch, K-R5; 17.Q-R6 mate. Possibly the worst miss ever in a world championship match.) **NxB; 15.PxNch, KxP; 16.Q-N4ch, K-Q6; 17.Q-B3ch, Q-K6; 18.K-N4, QxQch; 19.KxQ, P-N3;** (19 . . . P-KN4!?) **20.B-Q6! N-B4; 21.K-B4! N-R5;** (Not 21 . . . NxB; 22.PxP, N-K1; 23.P-Q5 winning) **22.K-N4, PxPch** (Not 22 . . . P-KN4; 23.B-B8 or B-N8) **23.KxN, KxP** and the game was drawn some sixty moves later.

The Russian side's first positive move came off the chessboard with the planting of a 'parapsychologist', a mysterious Dr Zukhar, in the audience. By a remarkable coincidence he was known to Korchnoy's secretary Petra Leeuwerik. Whether Dr Zukhar (should it be Sucker?) was emitting 'death-rays', attempting hypnotism, or just watching the chess was of no consequence. The self-destruct button was duly pressed in the challenger's camp. During play Korchnoy hid in his box between moves; away from the board his team redirected their energies from Karpov to the doctor, and Korchnoy himself threatened to 'kick his head in'.

In the seventh game Karpov's hedgehog tactics began to pay dividends. Korchnoy's play was too optimistic and then just plain bad. In the diagram position, out of sheer desperation, he sacrificed a piece with 1.N-K4 (Karpov certainly need not have allowed this) and, at the adjournment after NxN 2.QxRPch, K-B1, was as astonished as everyone to find that Black has no sensible way out of the check. Thus, if 3.Q-R8ch, K-B2; 4.Q-R7ch, K-B3; 5.Q-R4ch, K-B4 (5 . . . K-N2; 6.RxN, P-Q7; 7.R-K7ch, K-B1; 8.R-KR7!) 6.Q-N4ch, K-K4; 7.Q-N3ch! and Black gets nowhere. Alternatively 3.Q-R8ch, K-B2; 4.Q-R7ch, K-K1; 5.Q-N8ch, K-Q2; 6.RxPch, K-B1 (or N-Q3, Q-N7ch) 7.R-Rch, BxR; 8.K-N1 and Black has no good continuation (8 . . . P-B7? 9. R-QB1 and Q-R2). So another draw.

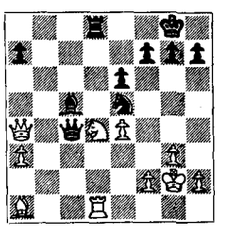


The deadlock was finally broken in the eighth game.

White: A. Karpov **Black: V. Korchnoy**
1.P-K4, P-K4; 2.N-KB3, N-QB3; 3.B-N5, P-QR3; 4.B-R4, N-B3; 5.0-0, NxP; 6.P-Q4, P-QN4; 7.B-N3, P-Q4; 8.PxP, B-K3; 9.QN-Q2. An old move, recently revived by Balashov, but hardly a surprise as he is one of Karpov's seconds. The point is that this move order avoids the 9.P-B3, B-QB4; 10.QN-Q2, B-B4 of the second and fourth games. **9. . . N-B4, 10.P-B3, P-N3?!** but if this is what Korchnoy had prepared it looks terribly fishy. Black has quite enough weak squares already. **11.Q-K2, B-N2; 12.N-Q4!** Very strong! **12 . . . NxP; 13.P-KB4, N-B5; 14.P-B5, PxP; 15.NxBP, R-KN1;** 15 . . . 0-0 is equally horrible eg. 16.BxN, NPxB; 17.NxB, KxN; 18.NxP, PxN; 19.Q-K5ch. **16.NxN, QPxN; 17.B-B2, N-Q6; 18.B-R6, B-KB1; 19.QR-Q1, Q-Q4; 20.BxN, PxB; 21.RxQP, Q-B3; 22.BxB, Q-N3ch; 23.K-R1, KxB; 24.Q-B3, R-K1; 25.N-R6, R-N2; 26.R-Q7!** An elegent finish if 26 . . . BxR, 27.QxPch, RxQ; 28.RxR mate. **26 . . . R-QN1;** Or 26 . . . R-K2; 27.RxR, RxR; 28.Q-B6ch, K-B1; 29.Q-Q8 mate. **27.NxP, BxR; 28.N-Q8ch Resigns.** Probably the French Defence will soon make a comeback.

Problem 95

White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 23 August.



Solution to Problem 93

1. K-B7, P-R4; 2. K-K6, P-R5; 3. K-Q5, P-R6; 4. K-B4! P-R7; 7. B-N4, P-R8=Q; 8. P-N3 mate

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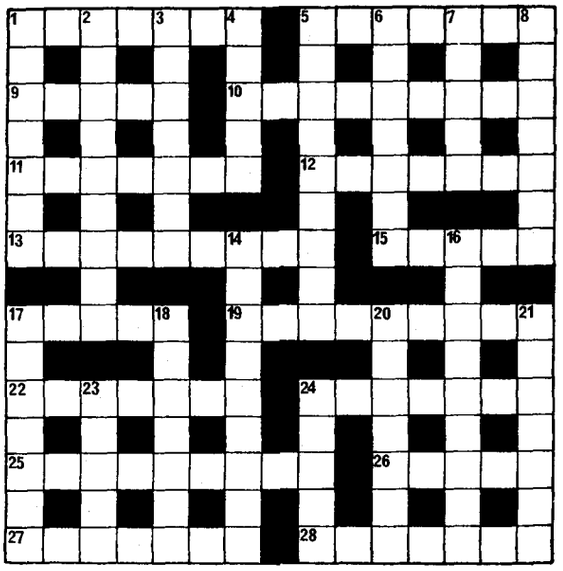
Weekend Crossword 1272

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1272, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 22 August.



ACROSS

1. Animal which needs rod and whip (7).
5. Birds go a short distance behind a fellow (7).
9. Physical exercise may do for a nut (5).
10. Train a dog to make progress (9).
11. It may be damn rot, but it's very incisive! (7).
12. The scientist caught me getting mixed up with this (7).
13. Stella's companion has other pals (9).
15. Records broken by runners? (5).
17. Town in mountain for royal family? (5).
19. Usually makes a man recover (9).
22. Old man with suns and protection from rays (7).
24. Where one is not back without a relative (7).
25. Just the place in which to study nothing (9).
26. Move to shift the blame (5).
27. Second in class after a game and most relaxed (7).
28. They look for oriental king among prophets (7).

DOWN

1. Get the better of a woman in the afternoon (7).
2. Fabric valued although torn (9).
3. Can vote corruptly for a little money (7).
4. Like Gilbert's bo'sun (5).
5. Bird gives dictator nothing back (9).
6. It is tidiest to have a meal in the home (7).
7. Where I am in and out of cover (5).
8. Thus the evil one turns up in music (7).
14. Outstanding feature of things which are tall but not heavy? (9).
16. It is delicious to give a friend a place to eat (9).
17. To one sort of type a Liberal is in the news (7).
18. Tell again that the others had their dinner (7).
20. Piece of music for boy held by rake (7).
21. Foreigners look for negative backing (7).
23. Composition in favour on dozens of discs (5).
24. Man who makes us follow a bird (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to Salamanca 8

B	I	L	B	O	G	A	N	D	A	L	F			
O	D	E	O	N	I	P	E	A	G	E	R			
R	E	G	M	I	M	I	C	S	G	G	O			
O	A	A	B	E	L	P	K	H	O	O	D			
M	A	L	A	W	I	P	O	M	E	L	O			
I	G	A	D	D	R	I	V	E	L	A	S			
R	R	B	I	D	E	N	T	R	O	S	A			
G	O	L	L	U	M	G	E	I	G	E	R			
A	L	U	M	A	O	L	U	A	U	H	U			
N	I	E	E	L	R	O	N	D	S	A	M			
J	E	A	N	S	A	I	P	O	L	K	A			
A	R	A	G	O	R	N	O	C	E	A	N			

Unclued answers are names of characters in Tokien's *The Lord of the Rings.*

Prizewinners to Salamanca 8

Bob Hitchcock (H. Wycombe)
J. M. Houghton (Horley)
M. Purcell (Tewkesbury)

APPOINTMENTS

PRESTON POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS UNION

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(new Post)

Responsible for administration, staffing, trading and entertainments. Salary £5,000-£6,000 according to experience.

Also

Finance Officer

(new Post)

Salary £4,000-£5,000 according to experience. Full driving licence essential.

Applicants for both posts should have a good knowledge of the operation of Students' unions. Letters of application including full curriculum vitae and two references to **The Admin/Finance Officer, Preston Polytechnic Students Union, Fylde Road, Preston, Lancs. Preston (0772) 58382,** not later than Friday 18 August.

THE LONDON HOSPITAL (WHITECHAPEL)

Locum Senior Psychologist

is required in the Department of Child Psychiatry, to cover maternity leave from 1 September 1978 to 1 May 1979, four days a week.

Applicant must have experience in working with children, and of behaviour modification techniques.

Whitley Council Salary and Conditions.

For further information phone the Secretary of the Child Psychiatry Department.

Application form and job description available from **Sue Clark, Personnel Services Department, The London Hospital, Whitechapel, London E1 1BB. Tel: 01-247 5454 Ext 388.**

Radio Times

requires an

ORGANISER

Salary £5,050-£6,000 p.a.

To be responsible to the Editor for the operation of a budgetary control system for regulating editorial expenditure and to advise on cost effectiveness of features proposals.

Preferably a graduate with previous experience on a national newspaper or magazine with knowledge of accounting procedures.

Based in London.

Please telephone or write immediately, enclosing addressed envelope, for application form quoting reference 78.G.1503NS to **Appointments Department, BBC, London W1A 1AA. Tel: 01-580 4468 extn 4619.**

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Wanted for small office near Hampstead Heath station. Must be accurate typist experienced in layout. Some simple accounts work involved.

Salary on scale £3,316-£3,799 (under review). 5 weeks holiday. Applications to: **Institute of Social Studies in Medical Care, 14 South Hill Park, London NW3 (01-794 7793).**

WANTED FOR SEPTEMBER

Science and mathematics teachers to 'O' and 'A' level.

Applications in writing with CV and two references to: **Director of Studies, Linken Tutors, 49/53 High Street, Kensington, London W8 5ED.**

TEA, A CHAT AND A JOB at the Winifred Johnson Office Staff Bureau, 118 New Bond Street, W1 (opp. Fenwick's). 493 3005.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

requires

Executive Assistant

to work 4 days a week, in the Asia Research department on Far East and Southeast Asia and handle and coordinate membership on individual cases of concern to Amnesty International. Applicants should have some knowledge of the political and social conditions of the region. Good typing essential. Knowledge of a Southeast or East Asian language an advantage. Closing date 21 August, 1978. Salary £3,300 per annum.

For application form 'phone 01-836 7788 Ext. 289 or contact 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF.

WORK AT THE TUC

The TUC needs **two Assistants** in its **Social Insurance** and **Industrial Welfare Departments.** One Assistant to work in the field of health, safety and welfare, and the other to work in the field of Social Security and related matters. Salary on a scale rising to £5,479 (under review) including London weighting.

Details and application form from:

General Secretary,
TUC,
Congress House,
Great Russell Street,
London WC1B 3LS.

WEST LONDON MISSION

We have vacancies for residential social workers in our hostels for alcoholics, ex-offenders and people on probation. These are demanding posts which would only appeal to those who enjoy a challenge.

Salary in accordance with NJC Scales. 4 weeks holiday.

Apply: **Clifford Padget, West London Mission, Kingsway Hall, 75 Kingsway, London WC2B 6TA. Tel. No. 01-405 3246.**

UK COUNCIL for Overseas Student Affairs require an internationally minded PA/Secretary for its casework section. Salary around £3,000. Contact UKCOSA, 60 Westbourne Grove, London W2. 01-229 9268.

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Competent person required to join small trade union office. Age immaterial. Salary up to £3,210 p.a.

Apply: **General Federation of Trade Unions, Central House, Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0HY. Telephone: 01-387 2578.**

SPITALFIELDS NEIGHBOURHOOD LAW SERVICE

in conjunction with Tower Hamlets Law Centre requires solicitor willing to specialise in all aspects of housing law. Previous Law Centre experience desirable. Ability to type. The Law Service covers the ward of Spitalfields, an inner-city deprived area with a multi-racial community. The team of three will work primarily with existing groups on such issues as repairs, CPO's, security of tenure, etc.

Further details: VANESSA CHADWICK, SNLS, 192 HANBURY STREET, LONDON E1. Closing date: 7 September, 1978.

ASSISTANT TO GENERAL SECRETARY OF INSURANCE STAFF UNION

Ambitious person, early twenties, capable of working on own initiative. A background of Industrial Relations would be advantageous. Work entails research on relevant Government legislation and current Industrial Relations practices, handling of Personal cases and internal Union communications. Starting Salary £3,500 p.a. plus allowances. Applications in writing with brief personal and career details to GENERAL SECRETARY, PHOENIX STAFF UNION OFFICE, 4/5 KING WILLIAM STREET, LONDON EC4P 4HR.

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Please send large self-addressed envelope to the Personnel Section, Commission for Racial Equality, 10/12 Allington Street, London SW1E 5EH, for application form and further details.

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NEW STATESMAN

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Theatres

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